

Eisodus as Exodus: The Song of the Sea (Exod 15) Reconsidered

In an essay that appeared in a previous volume of this journal, I suggested that the Song of Deborah (Judg 5) preserved what I termed pseudo-mythopoeic concepts regarding the defense of the Israelite highland settlements against lowland urban Canaanite cultures in the early Iron Age¹. In that essay, I argued that the chariot imagery in Judg 5 connected the Canaanite army of Sisera to memories of Egyptian mechanisms of conquest from the Bronze Age that lingered in Israelite memory as an ideological allergen. In this way, Canaanites were understood as manifesting Egyptian imperial culture of an earlier era, and the defense against the encroachment of these lowland Canaanites was characterized as an ongoing struggle against the specter of Egypt. I further noted that these concepts may have been the generating circumstances for the growth of the Exodus myth as Israelite religion developed in subsequent periods². In the present study, I wish to extend this line of inquiry in relation to another poetic work often connected to Judg 5 on both formalistic and thematic grounds and pivotal to the Exodus tradition in the Biblical record, i.e., the Song of the Sea (Exod 15).

Exod 15 provides us with a window into how the pseudo-mythopoeic concepts evident in Judg 5 eventually became a full-blown liturgical myth³. Though a significant number of scholars in recent years have made cogent cases for Exod 15 as a composition dating from the late pre-exilic period or even later⁴, many still view this text as an early example of Israelite liturgical poetry due to its

¹ M. LEUCHTER, ““Why Tarry The Wheels of His Chariot? (Judg 5,28): Canaanite Chariots and Echoes of Egypt in the Song of Deborah”, *Bib* 91 (2010) 256-268.

² LEUCHTER, “Canaanite Chariots”, 268.

³ F.M. CROSS, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge, MA 1973) 120-123 [henceforth abbreviated as *CMHE*] has already noted the cultic nature of the poem. The following discussion does not contest the cultic context for the recitation of the poem but suggests a different mechanism whereby the cult acted as a conduit for the experiences enshrined in the Song of Deborah to form into Exod 15.

⁴ See among others H. SPIECKERMANN, *Heilsgegenwart. Eine Theologie*

purely mythic character and its archaic language⁵. The archaic linguistic character of Exod 15 indeed suggests its antiquity, but it cannot be used unconditionally to prove an early date. Contemporary discussions of Biblical Hebrew linguistics have pointed to difficulties in linguistic features as a sure criterion in dating Hebrew poetry. Though a lack of archaic forms is firm evidence for the lateness of a work, the presence of archaic forms and patterns is, for many scholars, not necessarily evidence of the antiquated origins of the work in which they appear⁶. Linguistic evidence is suggestive, but it must be viewed alongside other factors in order for a more convincing case to be made for a work's antiquity.

The recent study by B.D. Russell attempts to revisit the issue of the poem's compositional origins in just such a way⁷. While advocating the linguistic argument for an early date, RUSSELL offers support for the poem's antiquity by virtue of allusions to the work in other material including Psalms 74, 77 and 78⁸, Isaiah 11–12⁹, and

der Psalmen (FRLANT 148; Göttingen 1989) 96–115; S. KREUZER, *Die Frühgeschichte Israels in Bekenntnis und Verkündigung des Alten Testaments* (BZAW 178; Berlin 1989) 247–248; A. KLEIN, "Hymn and History in Exodus 15", paper presented at the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (San Francisco, CA).

⁵ See, e.g., D.A. ROBERTSON, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry* (SBLD 3; Missoula, MT 1972) 152; CROSS, *CMHE*, 121–124. A summary of other scholars who assign an early date to the poem may be found in the discussion of S.C. RUSSELL, *Images of Egypt in Early Biblical Literature. Cisjordan-Israelite, Transjordan-Israelite, and Judahite Portrayals* (BZAW 403; Berlin 2009) 143.

⁶ For the most thorough and current discussion, see I.M. YOUNG – R. REZETKO – M. EHRENSVAARD, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts* (London 2008) I–II. Nevertheless, while linguistic evidence may not necessarily be conclusive, when it is considered alongside other evidence it may indeed provide useful corroborating evidence for dating certain compositions.

⁷ B.D. RUSSELL, *The Song of the Sea. The Date of Composition and Influence of Exodus 15:1–21* (SBL 101; Frankfurt a. Main 2007).

⁸ RUSSELL, *Song*, 113–130. Russell is uncertain regarding the date of Psalms 74 and 77, but concludes that Psalm 78 is a late 8th century work. I have argued elsewhere, however, that Psalm 78 originated in an earlier Jerusalemite context before its inclusion into the Psalms of Asaph by the late 8th century; see my essay "The Reference to Shiloh in Psalm 78", *HUCA* 77 (2006) 1–31. The linguistic evidence RUSSELL cites for Psalm 78 as an 8th century work (*Song*, 128–130) may be explained by successive rehearsal in ongoing royal liturgical contexts; see below for more on this concept.

⁹ RUSSELL, *Song*, 109.

other texts. Literary dependence within the earliest datable example of these works (in his opinion, Psalm 78) indicates the authoritative status of Exod 15 already by the 8th century; this increases the likelihood that the poem derives from a more antiquated period¹⁰. Russell's analysis brings new considerations to the evaluation of the linguistic evidence in Exod 15, but there are limitations to the certitude involved in the literary connections he discusses. At the heart of the matter is the question of whether the allusions Russell identifies draw from a fixed textual form of Exod 15, or if all of these texts draw from a common oral *Fundtradition* of lexical convention, of which Exod 15 eventually emerged as the outstanding example. If this is the case, then an early date for Exod 15 is not assured¹¹. Consequently, the poem's viability as a window into Iron I Israelite socio-cultic consciousness remains in question.

Conversely, if we could determine that Exod 15 was already a fixed literary entity by the time the aforementioned texts were penned, then the intertextual links Russell identifies would indeed be quite suggestive of direct dependence of the latter upon the former. It would further indicate that the writer who set the poem into a textual form utilized a widely known and normative rendition of the poem that would effectively appeal to his intended audience, commanding their attention and theological interest. In this case, the links Russell identifies need not strictly be a matter of a literary citation of a text but the recital of a familiar, authoritative oral tradition (F.M. Cross has already argued convincingly that Exod 15 is best seen as originating in an oral milieu)¹². Moreover, if a period of textualization can be determined, a stronger case for dating the origination of the poem may be made, for the oral composition of the work must necessarily predate its textualization. Before adopting the view that Exod 15 is indeed an Iron I period composition — and thus a window into Israelite thought and culture in that period — additional evidence must be mustered regarding the process

¹⁰ RUSSELL, *Song*, 130.

¹¹ RUSSELL himself admits this possibility (*Song*, 100). The model of a *Fundtradition* is discussed thoroughly by P. SANDERS, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32* (OTS 32; Leiden 1996) 34-35, 374-377. Deuteronomy 32 will be discussed further below as a control by which additional qualifications may be brought to bear on the textualization of Exod 15.

¹² On the oral provenance of the poem, see CROSS, *CMHE*, 120-123. See also ID., *From Epic to Canon* (Baltimore, MD 1998) 139-141.

of its textualization. This requires re-examining the issue of scribalism in early Israel and the upper limit for determining when textualization would have been possible.

I. Scribes and literacy in pre-exilic Israel: how early?

In 1991, D.W. Jamieson-Drake published an important study of socio-economic factors in ancient Israel indicating that the Judahite state could only have emerged in the late 8th century BCE¹³. For Jamieson-Drake, a scribal class could therefore only have emerged at this time as well, for scribalism was contingent upon the existence of a state with a centralized power structure and system of administrative hierarchy. Many scholars have followed Jamieson-Drake's lead in seeing the composition of biblical literature as taking place only within the context of a stratified, urban-based state system¹⁴. For some, this begins in the late 8th century BCE¹⁵, while others view the majority of biblical literature as originating in the Persian period¹⁶. Certainly, Jerusalem was at that time entrenched within a well organized administrative system that could support textual production, furnishing a social environment where such texts would more likely arise. And even as some circles during the Persian period attempted to reconnect with pre-exilic memories and institutions, the influence of imperial culture left an indelible impression upon how those memories and institutions were eventually represented in textual form¹⁷. Thus the arguments for the origination of many biblical compositions

¹³ D.W. JAMIESON-DRAKE, *Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah. A Socio-Archaeological Approach* (JSOTS 109; Sheffield 1991).

¹⁴ See, for example, P.R. DAVIES, *Scribes and Schools. The Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures* (Louisville 1998) 60-61; K. VAN DER TOORN, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, MA 2007), though VAN DER TOORN does not discount certain important literary antecedents from the late pre-exilic period around which the Persian period scribes developed more extensive material.

¹⁵ N.A. SILBERMAN – I. FINKELSTEIN, "Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah, and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology", *JSOT* 30 (2006) 259-285.

¹⁶ DAVIES, *Scribes and Schools*, 65-71, especially p. 69.

¹⁷ P.R. BEDFORD, *Temple Restoration in Early Achaemenid Judah* (JSJS 65; Leiden 2001) 260-264, points to efforts to establish some continuity with the monarchic past in the early Persian period, especially in light of the oracles of Haggai and Zechariah. Yet it is clear from the chronological frame-

between the late 8th century BCE and the Persian period find support in situating the biblical authors within a cultural continuum that did not characterize earlier eras.

To be sure, Jamieson-Drake's study correctly identifies features that contributed to the rise of Judah as a multi-tiered state in the late 8th century. There can be little doubt that this accounts for a rise in literature emerging from its scribal establishment from that time down to the end of the monarchic period¹⁸. And there also can be little doubt that the Persian period sees the orchestration of most of the materials that would be standardized and canonized as Scripture by the shapers of the Hebrew Bible. However, this historical background for the redaction or orchestration of literary traditions is by no means the only setting for the generation of written sources. Moreover, while the formation of a state is indeed the best socio-political context for the emergence of written works, the question of what constituted a "state" in antiquity must be revisited. In the two decades since Jamieson-Drake's study, advances in scholarship point to the viability of different positions on both the issues of state formation and scribal resources in ancient Israel. Within the last decade, D.M. Master and L.E. Stager have both argued for a model of state formation that derives from patrimonial power structures rather than the strict socio-economic urbanization/centralization model advocated by Jamieson-Drake¹⁹. From this alternative per-

work of both collections of oracles that history is measured according to a Persian imperial calendar, and that the restoration of the Jerusalem Temple is a step toward integration into the imperial superstructure (*Temple Restoration*, 293-294). See also A.C. HAGEDORN, "Local Law in an Imperial Context: The Role of Torah in the (Imagined) Persian Period", *The Torah as Pentateuch*. New Models for Understanding Its Promulgation and Acceptance (eds. G.N. KNOPPERS – B.M. LEVINSON) (Winona Lake, IN 2007) 69-76, for the imperial influence upon the redaction of the Pentateuch.

¹⁸ SILBERMAN – FINKELSTEIN, "Temple and Dynasty"; B. HALPERN, "Jerusalem and the Lineages in the Seventh Century B.C.E.: Kinship and the Rise of Individual Moral Liability", *Law and Ideology in Monarchic Israel* (eds. B. HALPERN – D.W. HOBSON) (JSOTS 124; Sheffield 1991) 80-86; W.M. SCHNIEDEWIND, *How the Bible Became a Book*. The Textualization of Ancient Israel (New York – Cambridge 2004) 93-106 (who considers evidence from the 8th-7th centuries).

¹⁹ D.M. MASTER, "State Formation Theory and the Kingdom of Ancient Israel", *JNES* 60 (2001) 117-131; L.E. STAGER, "The Patrimonial Kingdom of Solomon", *Symbiosis, Symbolism and the Power of the Past*. Canaan, Ancient Israel, and their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina. Proceedings of the Centennial Symposium, W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeo-

spective, a state could form without a large centralized power structure or urban-based economy. Instead, a central locus of authority could insinuate itself into decentralized rural systems founded upon kinship structures, creating new dynamics of allegiance and socio-economic affiliation²⁰.

Such a state model derives from extant systems of lineage/kinship and socio-economic interaction between them already in place throughout the hinterland, and which remained as such even as a state emerged as a discernible sociological entity²¹. Centralization and urbanized economy, as defined by Jamieson-Drake, constitutes only one form of a state, one that admittedly emerges in late 8th century BCE Judah but which does not preclude other, earlier manifestations of a state. Rather, the literary, anthropological and archaeological evidence pertaining to the Iron I-IIa periods points to the shift from chiefdoms to a state in a rudimentary form by the Iron IIa period²², and one that grew into the standards identified by Jamieson-Drake in the Iron IIb period. The ramifications of the foregoing are that one can speak of royal scribes in periods before the late 8th century BCE, and indeed there are grounds for seeing resources for scribalism surfacing even before this time. Certainly, the recent discoveries of the Tel Zayit and Tel Qeyeifah inscriptions indicate that literacy — while not widespread by any means — was alive and well in the 10th century BCE²³.

logical Research and American Schools of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, May 29-31, 2000 (eds. W.G. DEVER – S. GITTIN) (Winona Lake, IN 2003) 63-73.

²⁰ STAGER, “Patrimonial Kingdom”.

²¹ HALPERN, “Jerusalem and the Lineages”, 59-75, notes that the clan system remained intact at least down to the reforms of Hezekiah but suffered thereafter. As I have noted elsewhere, however, clan integrity is evident in later periods as well, as suggested by the reflections upon lineage diversity in the Book of Jeremiah, cf. M. LEUCHTER, “The ‘Prophets’ and the ‘Levites’ in Josiah’s Covenant Ceremony”, *ZAW* 121 (2009) 36-44.

²² For an overview of factors leading to this type of state, see C. MEYERS, “Kinship and Kingship: The Early Monarchy”, *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* (ed. M.D. COOGAN) (New York – Oxford 1998) 178-183.

²³ As of this writing, very little has been published regarding the Khirbet Qeyeifah inscription beyond the fact that it was discovered in situ in an early to mid 10th century stratum and that it incorporates some language suggesting a royal administration. For a consideration of the inscription’s impact upon a reconstruction of 11th-10th century Israelite sociology, see J.M. HUTTON, *The Transjordanian Palimpsest. The Overwritten Texts of Personal Exile and Transformation in the Deuteronomistic History* (BZAW 396; Berlin 2009) 170.

There is good reason to see literacy as a resource for the powerful even in the pre-state period. R.D. Miller's work on pre-state chiefdoms has pointed to the recycling of resources from Late Bronze Age institutions in early Iron Age hinterland contexts²⁴, and two more recent examinations shed additional light on these conditions. The first, by R. Byrne, conceives of the secondary chiefdom system identified by Miller as a social space where scribes could peddle their skills to the elite in the transition from the Late Bronze to Early Iron ages²⁵. J.M. Hutton arrives at a similar conclusion, and argues that social and religious elites were the patrons of scribes whose skills could bolster their claims to power, and that the early 10th century Israelite state/s could employ scribal resources²⁶. When considered alongside studies emphasizing the prominent place of priestly castes in the sustenance of literacy and scribalism²⁷, and bolstered by the discovery of the Tel Zayit and Khirbet Qeiyefah inscriptions, the model proposed by Jamieson-Drake must be adjusted to allow for much earlier opportunities for the emergence of written works in ancient Israel beyond the parameters he delineates.

II. The Textualization of Exod 15: when and how?

If the limited presence of scribes in Iron I Israel is admitted, then the archaic style of the poem could be explained by its early textualization among these scribes who transcribed it from an active context as an oral liturgy. This, however, poses a problem: the presence of scribes in early Israel may allow for the poem's early transcription, but the presence of such early scribes does not necessitate the

²⁴ R.D. MILLER, *Chieftains of the Highland Clans*. A History of Israel in the 12th and 11th Centuries B.C. (Grand Rapids, MI 2005).

²⁵ R. BYRNE, "The Refuge of Scribalism", *BASOR* 345 (2007) 22-23.

²⁶ HUTTON, *Transjordanian Palimpsest*, 169-175.

²⁷ D.M. CARR, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*. Origins of Scripture and Literature (New York – Oxford 2005) 116-121; I.M. YOUNG, "Literacy in Ancient Israel: Interpreting the Evidence", *VT* 48 (1998) 408. For both CARR and YOUNG, priests factor significantly into the literati of Israel. Considering the role of priestly leadership in the pre-state period and the evidence within the Biblical record that David was able to recruit scribes into his early administration, it seems likely that priestly authority during and before David's day was characterized by literary facility as well.

early transcription, and thus early date, of the work. Oral modalities remained in vogue alongside the growth of writing throughout the duration of the pre-exilic period (and even beyond)²⁸, and one might conceivably argue that the poem was committed to writing at a late date with those archaic forms intact. This would impede our ability to use the poem as a barometer of Iron I socio-religious pre-suppositions, since it remains possible that a fairly late scribe may have textualized a poem with archaic forms that did not actually originate in an archaic period.

A solution to this problem rests in a comparison with another poem embedded in the Pentateuch that is often regarded as holding a very ancient pedigree, namely, the Song of Moses (Deut 32). A recent article by M. Thiessen calls attention to the fact that while Deut 32 contains a primarily archaic linguistic character, the poem exhibits a measurable degree of flourishes touting later linguistic features²⁹. The traditional position taken by scholars on this matter is that either the poem's author worked at a somewhat late period and introduced deliberate archaizing language into his composition, or that the poem was written during a period of linguistic transition (e.g., the 9th-8th centuries BCE)³⁰. Thiessen offers a more attractive proposal, however: Deut 32 was composed in a fairly early period, but the introduction of later forms into the poem accompanied regular cultic recitation over many generations³¹. Thiessen's model accounts for many of the problems traditionally associated with determining the setting and function of Deut 32, as well as its ultimate place within the Book of Deuteronomy³². Following Thiessen's observations, the textualiza-

²⁸ CARR, *Tablet of the Heart*, 126-128. The persistence of oral-centered discourse is felt even in much later times when textuality had become a more familiar enterprise. See E. SHANKS ALEXANDER, "The Orality of Rabbinic Writing", *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature* (eds. M. JAFFEE – C.E. FONROBERT) (New York – Cambridge 2007) 38-55.

²⁹ M. THIESSEN, "The Form and Function of the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-43)", *JBL* 123 (2004) 401-424.

³⁰ D.A. ROBERTSON, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry* (SBLD 3; Missoula, MT 1972) 154-155; S.A. NIGOSIAN, "Linguistic Patterns of Deuteronomy 32", *Bib* 78 (1997) 223-224.

³¹ THIESSEN, "Song of Moses", 422.

³² As I have suggested in a previous study, the place of this poem as a northern Levite liturgy moved the redactors of Deuteronomy to place it in the closing frame of the pre-exilic edition of the book, cf. M. LEUCHTER, "Why is the Song of Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy?", *VT* 57 (2007) 314.

tion of Deut 32 must have occurred at a time when these linguistic changes were already entrenched in the poem. If we accept a similar oral/cultic background to Exod 15, then the fact that its textual form shows no later linguistic features — a completely unique feature in the canon of biblical Hebrew poetry — can best be explained by the fact that it was committed to text at an early point in time, i.e., before later linguistic conventions could bleed into the normative form of the poem through prolonged recitation.

There can be little doubt that Exod 15 continued to be recited orally down to the 8th and 7th centuries; the fact that a later scribe incorporated it into the Exodus narrative indicates that it continued to be well known in the scribe's time and that its inclusion would immediately command the attention of the scribe's intended audience³³. However, the linguistic features ossified in the canonical form of the poem reveal that an antique version of this work was utilized by this scribe. The scribe in question must have drawn from an archival textual source rather than a contemporaneous oral rendition, the latter of which would have invariably included later linguistic forms from the scribe's own day³⁴. By contrast, the poem's early textualization

³³ This phenomenon is common to the incorporation of older poetry into narrative contexts elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. J.W. WATTS, "Song and the Ancient Reader", *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 22 (1995) 146, puts the matter well when he remarks: "the inclusion of poetry within narrative expanded the latter's representational scope and, especially, its affective impact on hearers and readers". The literary logic governing the inclusion of poetry into prose narrative changes over time, however. See S. WEITZMAN, *Song and Story in Biblical Narrative*. The history of a literary convention in Ancient Israel (Bloomington, IN 1997) for a full discussion.

³⁴ On the matter of a textual archive available to the later — probably priestly — scribe who shaped the Exodus account, see VAN DER TOORN, *Scribal Culture*, 63-65, 69-70, 86-89. Van der Toorn notes the centrality of temple archives and temple-based scribal "workshops" where sacred texts were preserved and transmitted over long periods of time in a variety of ancient loci, and there is no reason to suppose that this was not also the case in Jerusalem. This would especially be the case during the late pre-exilic period given the deep impact of both Egyptian and Mesopotamian political culture on the state institutions of Judah by that time. Carr, *Tablet of the Heart*, 168, is skeptical that texts produced by temple scribes in the late pre-exilic period would have been taken with the exiles to Babylon. However, if written works had obtained a ritual-iconic status as argued recently by J.W. WATTS, *Ritual and Rhetoric in Leviticus*. From Sacrifice to Scripture (New York – Cambridge 2007) 193-214, then it is reasonable to assume that some important written works were brought to Babylon by the

preserved its original, archaic linguistic features in the copy eventually utilized by the Exodus narrative's redactor.

We may go further, in fact, and support Russell's view that the current form of the poem reflects a compositional unity by noting that this process of textualization must have included the entirety of the work in its canonical form³⁵. Had Exod 15 undergone stages of redactional development, some less-archaic linguistic elements would have invariably crept into its verses. As studies of ancient scribal methodology have demonstrated, redaction of older material provides ample opportunity for change based on the scribes' own cultural, ideological and linguistic predilections³⁶. A comparison with Judg 5 is instructive here. As some scholars have noted, Judg 5 originated in the 12th century BCE but received redactional expansion in the 10th century³⁷. This expansion would account for the minor introduction of less-archaic linguistic forms into its verses. The utter lack of such linguistic features in Exod 15 suggests that it was not subjected to similar redactional/textualizing processes. Rather, it was committed to text in a wholesale manner and remained fixed in such an unadulterated form, at least insofar as the archival source utilized by the redactor of the Exodus narrative is concerned.

When might this period of textualization have taken place? I would propose that we should consider the period of the early monarchy under David and Solomon as the background to this process, and several lines of evidence converge to support this proposal. First, scribal activity and propaganda are characteristic of shifts in power and the accession of rulers in the Ancient Near East. The production of such literature surely benefits from a well-devel-

exiles of 597 BCE, for whom both Jeremiah and Ezekiel identify an ongoing covenantal relationship with YHWH. Temple scribes of the Persian period would have invariably inherited these and other texts after the waves of imperially-sponsored repatriation.

³⁵ RUSSELL, *Song*, 19-23.

³⁶ CARR, *Tablet of the Heart*, 148-149; B.M. LEVINSON, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (New York – Oxford 1997) 23-52 (re: redactional reworking of diverse sources in Deuteronomy 12); VAN DER TOORN, *Scribal Culture*, 115.

³⁷ C.L. ECHOLS, "Tell Me, O Muse". The Song of Deborah (Judges 5) in the Light of Heroic Poetry (LHBOTS 487; London – New York 2008). R. DE HOOP, "Judges 5 Reconsidered: Which Tribes? What Land? Whose Song?", *The Land of Israel in Bible, History and Theology* (eds. J. VAN RUITEN – J.C. DE VOS) (VTS 124; Leiden 2009) 151-166.

oped scribal caste, but a single skilled scribe or small circle of scribes would still be capable of producing important texts, and we have seen that resources for this were in place by the 10th century BCE³⁸. The Mesha inscription of a century later is a potent witness to how kings of small Semitic states behaved upon coming to power: one of Mesha's first acts as king is to secure a scribe who in turn produced official texts to standardize a national ideology³⁹. The old lists of royal officials from the reign of both David and Solomon (2 Sam 8,17; 20,25; 1 Kgs 4,3) show similar interest in securing scribal figures for purposes of prestige, political legitimacy and, no doubt, the attaining of a numinous quality to royal imperatives and influence⁴⁰.

Second, the memory of David in 1-2 Samuel characterizes him as a bard as much as a warrior. The two are, of course, not mutually exclusive, especially given the fact that the ancient combat myth is most forcefully expressed in poetic verse in both biblical and extra-biblical contexts⁴¹. An historiographer interested in presenting a mythically-resonant image of David would thus be apt to connect the founder of the dominant royal dynasty with traditions of liturgical poetry, song and performance⁴². But from the mnemo-historical perspective, this also suggests that David's reign was remembered as a time when old poetic liturgies were an important component of fledgling monarchic self-understanding⁴³. The tradition regarding David's decision to have an official lament "taught"

³⁸ See also CARR, *Tablet of the Heart*, 131, 163.

³⁹ See the discussion by SCHNIEDEWIND, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 41.

⁴⁰ On the numinous character of writing, especially within a pre- or non-literate culture, see SCHNIEDEWIND, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 24-34.

⁴¹ See e.g. the discussion by P.D. MILLER, *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* (HSM 5; Cambridge, MA 1973) passim; the Ugaritic Baal cycle, etc.

⁴² The mythic and ritualistic dimension of David's association with liturgical performance – both song and dance – receives thorough consideration by C.L. SEOW, *Myth, Drama and the Politics of David's Dance* (HSM 44; Atlanta, GA 1989). This association is clearly remembered by the Chronicler, who does not hesitate to present David as a prophet engaged in the recitation of a penitential prayer. See E. BEN ZVI, "Who Knew What? The Construction of the Monarchic Past in Chronicles and its Implication for the Intellectual Setting of Chronicles", *Judah and Judeans in the Persian Period* (eds. O. LIPSCHITS – G.N. KNOPPERS – R. ALBERTZ) (Winona Lake, IN 2007) 349-354.

⁴³ On mnemo-historical approaches to the study of biblical narrative, see R.S. HENDEL, "The Exodus in Biblical Memory", *JBL* 120 (2001) 601-622; D.L. FLEMING, "Mari and the Possibilities of Biblical Memory", *RA* 92 (1998) 44-78.

to the people and canonized into the Book of Yashar (2 Sam 1,18) is one expression of this memory: the tradition may not reflect an actual event, but it sheds light on how the historiographer behind the passage believed official ideologies in the formative years of the monarchy were established and preserved⁴⁴. Such an enterprise would consolidate claims to power of early kings interested in shaping public perception of royal policies⁴⁵.

Finally, the interest in demonstrating continuity with the past traditions of the tribal population in a way that reified the early monarchy's policies is evidenced in other works of liturgical verse best viewed as originating in the 10th century BCE as well. Psalm 99, for example, contains an early stratum of material that attempts to support the transfer of the Shilonite Ark to Jerusalem by appealing to the figures of Moses and Samuel, the outstanding personalities associated with the Shiloh tradition⁴⁶. Given the tensions that arose later between Solomon and the Shilonites (cf. 1 Kgs 2,26), this early stratum of material is best viewed as reflecting a composition dating to David's reign⁴⁷. If this brief poem is indeed a window into the logic of cultic politics during David's reign, it reveals that the earliest days of the monarchy saw an effort to associate the royal circle in Jerusalem with pre-monarchic liturgical norms.

The transcription and standardization of ancient cultic poetry such as Exod 15 would be consistent with this type of effort, and one that persisted (albeit in a different way) into Solomon's reign as well⁴⁸.

⁴⁴ SCHNIEDEWIND, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 53-55.

⁴⁵ HUTTON, *Transjordanian Palimpsest*, 172-173; BYRNE, "Refuge", 22.

⁴⁶ The addition of Aaronide terms and imagery in this psalm belongs to the secondary redactional stratum therein. See M. LEUCHTER, "The Literary Strata and Narrative Sources of Psalm xcix", *VT* 99 (2005) 30-36.

⁴⁷ Compare this to Ps 132,6, where the Ark is associated exclusively with Judahite locales. The mention of an Ephraimite or Shilonite background is strictly eschewed. For the qualified support of a Solomonic date to this psalm, see A. LAATO, "Psalm 132: A Case Study in Methodology", *CBQ* 61 (1999) 25-33. If the psalm does derive from a Solomonic writer, the likelihood that Ps 99 derives from David's reign is increased given the dramatic shift in geo-political interest. Even if it derives from a post-Solomonic writer, the ideological genotype encoded therein regarding Shilonite aversion must be traced to Solomon's reign.

⁴⁸ One indication of this is Solomon's patrimonial state strategy, which sought to incorporate extant clan hierarchies into a monarchic matrix. See STAGER, "Patrimonial Kingdom".

With the building of the Jerusalem Temple, its dedication in the name of YHWH (1 Kgs 8)⁴⁹ and its association with the royal Davidic line (2 Sam 7), an ancient work extolling YHWH's kingship would fit well into the official doctrine and liturgical curriculum of that establishment. We may therefore posit a textualization of Exod 15 sometime in this period, probably as part of a royal enterprise. Russell's argument for Psalm 78 as literarily dependent upon Exod 15 is thus reified, for if Exod 15 was a fixed part of the Jerusalem Temple library⁵⁰, then the production of a psalm advocating the royal/cultic institutions of Jerusalem would quite logically involve the direct citation of a venerated poem officialized by earlier literary standardization.

In sum: if the textualization of the poem is viewed as taking place during the early monarchy, then the poem's oral origins must necessarily antedate its textualization. Concomitant with the view of Russell and others, the pre-monarchic period seems an entirely likely backdrop.

III. Mythologizing domestic conflict: the first half of Exod 15

Exod 15 therefore provides a suitable window for evaluating the liturgical mindset of the same culture standing behind Judg 5, i.e., that of highland Israel in Iron I and the defense of the hinterland settlements against lowland threats⁵¹. These conditions were shaded in

⁴⁹ The main source for the "name" theology grafted onto the Jerusalem Temple is 1 Kgs 8. It is often assumed that this is a matter of Deuteronomistic interpolation or redactional development, but one should distinguish between the Deuteronomistic name theology in that chapter and earlier iterations of this theology. The language regarding the "calling" of YHWH's name upon the Temple differs from the Deuteronomistic terminology of YHWH "causing" his name to dwell therein, the latter of which derives from neo-Assyrian influence. See S.L. RICHTER, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology. lešakkēn šemô šām* in the Bible and the Ancient Near East (BZAW 318; Berlin 2002).

⁵⁰ All comparative evidence from the ancient Near East, alongside the preponderance of evidence internal to the biblical record, indicates that the Jerusalem Temple library would have housed the archive where such a text would have been kept. See VAN DER TOORN, *Scribal Culture*, 63-64. Arguments against Exod 15 as known by the literati in Jerusalem before the 8th century will be discussed below.

⁵¹ Here I suggest an alternative to the proposal of RUSSELL, *Images of*

the colors of cosmic metaphor already in Judg 5, where features of the ancient Canaanite combat myth were infused into the poem's picture of society and warfare⁵². However, it is only with Exod 15 that these concepts are lifted from historical contexts and expressed in purely mythic terms, where specific individuals and events are eschewed and replaced with an atemporal scheme and a lack of specific geo-locals⁵³. This contrasts significantly with Judg 5, which makes very clear the geographic and socio-economic specifics of Israel's tribes and clans on the one hand and the centrality of named individuals (Yael, Sisera, Shamgar, Deborah, Barak). Exod 15 avoids this by speaking in the abstract about YHWH's cosmic might and its international scope, a common and indeed essential feature of Israel's cultic recitations⁵⁴. Nevertheless, by evaluating its tropes we may see how the ideology and experiences behind Judg 5 were made mythic. From the outset of the poem, the author speaks in the language of symbolism and archetype:

I will sing of YHWH, for he is highly exalted;
Horse and his rider (סוס ורכבו) he has thrown into the sea (ים) (Exod 15,1)

In the language of the poem, it is YHWH exclusively who dominates over the enemy. The image of the enemy is none other than that of a chariot rider recalling Egyptian domination, and a later line in the poem confirms that this is the intended image:

Pharaoh's chariots (מרכבת פרעה) and his armies he cast into the sea (ים) (Exod 15,4)

Egypt, 148, that Exod 15 is a southern/Judahite composition. The southern and south-eastern regions he notes therein were familiar territories for caravan clans of Kenite-Midianite origin, whose influence is felt early on within the central highlands. See especially L.E. STAGER, "Forging an Identity: The Emergence of Ancient Israel", *The Oxford History of Biblical Israel*, 107-108; J.D. SCHLOEN, "Caravans, Kenites and Casus Belli: Enmity and Alliance in the Song of Deborah", *CBQ* 55 (1993) 30-38.

⁵² LEUCHTER, "Canaanite Chariots", 267-268.

⁵³ Nations are named, of course, in Exod 15,14-15, though these nations are mentioned in the abstract, and no particulars regarding topography, city names, population centers or territories are offered.

⁵⁴ CROSS, *CMHE*, 140-144.

Though somewhat more abstracted from historical context, this bears close similarity to the images within Judg 5 regarding the equation of Canaanite charioteers with the menace of Egyptian hegemony⁵⁵. Like Judg 5,2-5, YHWH's warrior traits are contrasted against the threat of Egypt, but here the typology is extended: the smaller culture (Canaan) is fully subsumed within the larger (Egypt), and YHWH confronts the enemy directly. The poet continues to abstract the pseudo-mythic imagery of Judg 5 through the transformation of the Kishon river (Judg 5,21) into the primordial Sea (יָם), invoking the traditional enemy of the Canaanite divine warrior drama, Sea/Yamm⁵⁶. But despite the full engagement of mythic language and typologies, Exod 15 maintains distinctions between Israelite and Canaanite usages of these tropes. The poet invokes the term יָם as an alloform of the primordial waters of chaos that appear later in the poem (תַּהֲמַת in v. 5), but in Canaanite myth, the divine warrior does battle against these watery entities. In Exod 15, the enemy in question is not Sea/Yamm, but Egypt⁵⁷. Indeed, the poet reinforces this distinction through the repetition of this pivotal moment several times between vv. 4-10: the captains of Egypt are drowned in the Sea (v. 4)⁵⁸, the deep covers the enemy and they sink beneath it (v. 5), and even when the rhetoric of battle against the Sea appears to surface (אֶפֶיךָ נִעְרַמוּ מִיָּם... קִפְאוּ תַהֲמַת בִּלְבָּיָם in v. 8), it is ultimately revealed to be a prelude to יָם functioning as an instrument of YHWH's might against the true enemy (יָם בְּרוּחֶךָ כִּסְמוֹ יָם in v. 10)⁵⁹.

⁵⁵ LEUCHTER, "Canaanite Chariots", 267-268.

⁵⁶ C. KLOOS, *Yhwh's Combat with the Sea. A Canaanite Tradition in Ancient Israelite Religion* (Leiden 1986) 127-157.

⁵⁷ See the related discussion by KLOOS, *Yhwh's Combat*, 142-145; CROSS, *CMHE*, 131-132.

⁵⁸ The full phrase בְּיָם סוּף seems to tie the event to a specific location (the Sea of Reeds) in a manner similar to the reference to the Kishon in Judg 5,21. B.F. BATTO, "The Reed Sea: *Requiescat in Pace*", *JBL* 102 (1983) 27-35, suggests repointing the text to read בְּיָם סוּף, i.e., "the final sea". However, if the poem is establishing an Egyptian typology for Canaanite enemies, then an association with an Egyptian border locale such as the Sea of Reeds is consistent with the poem's mythopoeic thrust; see S.C. RUSSELL, *Images of Egypt*, 130, n. 19.

⁵⁹ Compare the repetitions in vv. 4-5 to those involving Yael's dispatching of Sisera in Judg 5,24-27. The rhetorical function of extending the event is substantially the same, and for similar purposes, i.e., associating a particular

The poet thus utilizes Canaanite mythic *topoi*, but the content is unique to Israelite understandings of the cosmic battle YHWH continually fights on their behalf⁶⁰. The image is not of an actual sea-side skirmish but, rather, an understanding of the fate of defeated Canaanite aggressors against hinterland Israel and the divine cause of their defeat. Thus there is a dialectic relationship between form and content in Exod 15, for just as the poem relates YHWH's defeat of Egypt, the poet himself defeats his people's own Egypto-Canaanite social/cultural patrimony by rejecting the standards of their mythology. The semantics and semiotics of the poem hurl both Egypt and Canaan into the primordial waters of chaos, cosmically dismantling and dissociating them from Israel. Indeed, the poet himself hints at this meta-literary dynamic early in his composition, equating YHWH's indomitable power with the very act of singing or reciting the hymn itself (יְהוָה לִי לִישׁוּעָה in v. 2)⁶¹. As C. Kloos notes, the schematic structure of the song repeatedly equates the praising of YHWH (e.g., reciting a victory hymn such as the poem) with the defeat of the enemy⁶².

It is not only YHWH's defeat of Egypt-as-enemy that constitutes the making of Israel, then, but the actual commemoration of this mythic event. Israel would consistently be reborn through the recitation of a poem that spelled out, in the purest terms, the basic ideas that empowered it into being. The need to reconnect with this ideology on a regular basis was no doubt catalyzed by the fact that even though Egypt lost full control of Canaan at the end of the Bronze Age, it maintained a presence in the region as well as an interest in eventually reclaiming it⁶³. Thus, all enemies and threats

mythic typology with the character in question. In the case of Yael, it is the typology of the Canaanite deity Anat, cf. S.A. ACKERMAN, *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress, Queen*. Women in Judges and Biblical Israel (New York 1998) 51-64. In Exod 15,4-5, the device is utilized to forge a new understanding of יְהוָה as a mechanism of YHWH's power rather than the object of it.

⁶⁰ So also RUSSELL, *Song*, 41-42.

⁶¹ On the emendation of the MT of וְזָמְרָה, see W.H.C. PROPP, *Exodus 1-18* (AB; New York 1996) 471-472, 511-513. PROPP's analysis of the term and its place in the poem suggests that the poet was indeed employing a double-entendre regarding its etymological implications and its role as part of a liturgical hymn.

⁶² KLOOS, *Yhwh's Combat*, 138.

⁶³ STAGER, "Forging an Identity", 90.

became subsumed under the heading of Egypt, and all battles became expressions of YHWH's cosmic conflict with the Pharaoh and his chariots.

IV. Mythologizing kinship and the agrarian ideal: the second half of Exod 15

Consequently, the survival of the highland population against persistent attacks and the continuity of life in the hinterland would be commemorated as a mythic expression of divine action as well. To wit, the second half of Exod 15, and especially its closing verses, presents YHWH's protection of Israel in decidedly agrarian terms⁶⁴, specifying the merits of vigilantly engaging in such defensive measures:

In your loyalty (חסד־ךָ) you lead the people that you redeem (גאלת);
You guide them in your strength to your holy encampment (נוה קדשך)
(Exod 15,13)

You bring them in, and plant them (והטעמם)
In your highland estate (בהר נחלתך)⁶⁵;
The dais of your throne⁶⁶ (מכון לשבתך) which you have made for
yourself, YHWH
The sanctuary, Oh Lord, which your hands have established (מקדש
אדני בוננו ידיך),
YHWH shall reign forever and ever. (Exod 15,17-18)

⁶⁴ RUSSELL, *Song*, 30, suggests that YHWH makes the transition from warrior to shepherd in Exod 15. This remains a possible reading, especially given his view that the "mountain" is Sinai to which YHWH leads his people after their battle with the Egyptians (*Song*, 25). However, the ensuing discussion will illustrate that it is farming imagery that seems to dominate the second half of the poem, and that the "mountain" be read differently.

⁶⁵ I translate נחלתך as "your estate" here based on the typical translation/function of this same term in other contexts dealing with the ancestral estate in hinterland communities. However, the phrase may also be read as "the highlands of the [people of] your inheritance", based on the view that Israel itself is the נחלה of YHWH. See T.J. LEWIS, "The Ancestral Estate (נחלת אלהים) in 2 Samuel 14:16", *JBL* 110 (1991) 597-600.

⁶⁶ I here adjust only slightly the translation of the phrase as suggested by CROSS, *CMHE*, 125, n. 43.

The terms *חֶסֶדִּיךְ*, *קֶדְשְׁךְ*, *הָר נַחֲלֶיךָ* and *מִקְדָּשְׁךָ* lead many scholars see Exod 15 as a composition of the monarchic period or later, consonant as these collective terms are with the language of the Zion tradition⁶⁷. This remains possible, and the very fact that the poem was edited by a Jerusalemite scribe into the Exodus narrative as it now stands obviously indicates that it was part of the literary legacy inherited by the Jerusalemite literati⁶⁸. However, it is also possible that the appearance of these terms in the Zion tradition represent the appropriation of images and language from an older Israelite liturgical work for the purposes of legitimizing the formation of the Davidic monarchy⁶⁹.

A possible argument against this is that the 8th century BCE oracles of Isaiah make no overt allusions to Exod 15, which may lead some to conclude that Isaiah did not know the poem. Two factors, however, provide potential explanations for this. First, Isaiah's oracles are geared to promote Zion-centric ideology in the face of Ephraimite refugees, among whom the Exodus tradition was the dominant myth⁷⁰. The oracles of Amos make clear that a Judahite Exodus tradition existed (though distinct in conception from the Ephraimite Exodus tradition), but as Y. Hoffman has proposed, it was eclipsed by the Davidic myth in the religious/political discourse of Judah⁷¹. Isaiah's rhetoric, steeped in the Zion tradition and Davidic myth, may have been shaped to set boundaries against the influence of Ephraimite tradition in Jerusalem following the fall of the north in 721 BCE and the influence of their traditions among the city's elite⁷². If Exod 15 was read as part of an

⁶⁷ See, for instance, S.I.L. NORIN, *Er spaltete das Meer*. Die Auszugsüberlieferung in Psalmen und Kult des Alten Israel (Lund 1977) 36-40; KREUZER, *Die Frühgeschichte Israels*, 247-248; B.F. BATTO, *Slaying the Dragon*. Mythmaking in the Biblical Tradition (Louisville, KY 1992) 109 (see, however, his earlier argument in "Reed Sea", 30-31, n. 13); SPIECKERMANN, *Heilsgegenwart*, 114.

⁶⁸ See above re: the use of the poem in Psalm 78.

⁶⁹ On this see the poignant observation of D.S. VANDERHOOF, "Dwelling beneath the Sacred Space: A Proposal for Reading", *JBL* 118 (1999) 627-628.

⁷⁰ See SCHNIEDEWIND, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 87. On the Exodus as a "charter" myth for the northern Israelite state, see K. VAN DER TOORN, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel* (Leiden 1996) 287-301.

⁷¹ Y. HOFFMAN, "A North Israelite Typological Myth and a Judean Historical Tradition: The Exodus in Hosea and Amos", *VT* 39 (1989) 169-182.

⁷² Further to this point see SCHNIEDEWIND, *How the Bible Became a Book*, 73-90, who notes the sociopolitical effects of northern refugees at this time.

Exodus tradition associated with Ephraimite circles, Isaiah's avoidance of the poem follows his predilection for valorizing native Judahite mythotypes. Second, as Exod 15,13.17-18 suggest, Exod 15 is concerned with the mythic ramifications of life in the highland frontier, and liturgizes this experience for ritual rehearsal⁷³. If Isaiah does not refer to the poem, it may be due to its agrarian emphasis (see further below), which would not have served Isaiah's interests in reifying an urban Zion tradition against the rural ire that had accrued by his day⁷⁴.

Whatever the reasons for the lack of reference to Exod 15 in Isaiah's oracles, the pivotal term in identifying the poem as a product of the Zion tradition is חסד, and it is with the weight of this term in the *mythos* of the Davidic line that some commentators have assumed the poem's origination in a Jerusalemite setting. Even this term, however, carries implications for kinship structures that need not be strictly associated with its later appearance in the Zion tradition⁷⁵. The other terms involved in this question (מקדש, קדש, and הדר נחלתך) are not as heavily encumbered, and are easily acceptable as part of a poem unaware, or at least unconcerned, with a Jerusalemite theology⁷⁶. The poem may therefore still be used to recover concepts from the pre-monarchic hinterland culture. In particular, the phrase הדר נחלתך demands attention, as it is here where the poem begins to shift from the realm of the divine to that of the poet's own world, thereby incorporating Israel into its own myth⁷⁷. The construct הדר נחלתך is often cited as evidence of the monarchic-era composition of the poem, with the assumption that it relates

⁷³ See the conclusion to the present study for further discussion on this point.

⁷⁴ The 8th century BCE socio-economic tension between the urban and rural sectors is conveniently summarized by M.L. CHANEY, "Models Matter: Political Economy and Micah 6:9-15", *Ancient Israel. The Old Testament in its Social Context* (ed. P. ESLER) (Minneapolis, IN 2006) 146-149.

⁷⁵ See F.M. CROSS, *From Epic to Canon* (Baltimore, MD 1998) 5-6.

⁷⁶ PROPP, *Exodus 1-18*, 532, 568, notes that מקדש ("sanctuary") need not relate to a temple or shrine structure but is a viable description of sacred terrain, and that נדה קדש in v. 13 is especially connected to old tent-shrine ideology.

⁷⁷ Pace CROSS, *CMHE*, 141, who sees the *first* half of the poem as historically rooted. Nevertheless, CROSS's observation (*CMHE*, 142) that Ugaritic myth utilizes similar terminology for the divine realm supports the view that the poet wishes to establish a sort of parallel between the Israelite highlands and the divine abode.

to Mt. Zion⁷⁸. Alternately, some scholars see it as a reference to Sinai/Horeb, with the poem commemorating the covenant tradition associated with that locale⁷⁹. However, the phrase may also represent the highlands themselves (with *הר* functioning as a collective singular)⁸⁰, presented as inherited territory deriving from YHWH. The term *נחל ה* appears widely in the depiction of ancestral estates fostered within rural clan settings⁸¹, and it is fitting that in transferring the highlands to Israel, YHWH provides the horticultural prototype of how they are to pass it on to their own progeny. YHWH “plants” (*והטעמו*) his people in a manner consistent with the agrarian themes persisting in Deut 32,2.9-10.13-14; Hos 2,16-17.23-24; Jer 2,2-3 and other later texts⁸². And just as the people are charged to cultivate the land, YHWH cultivates his people by remaining among them in the highlands (*מבין לשבתך*), a presence attested in other Biblical sources as well⁸³.

This image contrasts strongly with Merneptah’s assertion that the “seed” of Israel was annihilated in the famous inscription on the Merneptah Stele (ca. 1209 BCE). Exod 15 affirms the very opposite: that Israel’s seed is alive and well, and no less than YHWH himself is the one who has planted them. Here we find an Israelite affirmation of a common late 2nd Millennium convention of using agricultural language to characterize the conditions of a group of people in relation to a larger power⁸⁴. In the case of Merneptah, who presents

⁷⁸ BATTO; SPIECKERMANN, *et al.*

⁷⁹ RUSSELL, *Song*, 25; B. HALPERN, *The Emergence of Israel in Canaan* (SBLM 29; Chico, CA 1983) 38-39.

⁸⁰ Scholars who view the poem as monarchic and Jerusalemite assume that the phrase must refer to Zion specifically, but a similar use of the collective singular can be found in 1 Sam 1,1 (*הר אפרים*) in relation to the Ephraimite highlands. KLOOS, *Yhwh’s Combat*, 135, is correct to note the abstract nature of the phrase, which fits a general reference to the highlands as a mythic landscape.

⁸¹ VAN DER TOORN, *Family Religion*, 199, 201.

⁸² On the connection between land cultivation, kinship networks, and the ancestral cult, see J.S. BERGMA, *The Jubilee from Leviticus to Qumran* (VTS 115; Leiden 2007) 65; F. STAVRAKOPOULOU, *Land of Our Fathers. The Role of Ancestor Veneration in Biblical Land Claims* (LHBOTS 473; London – New York 2010).

⁸³ See, e.g., Deut 33,29. The image/theme is discussed by HALPERN, “Jerusalem and the Lineages”, 68-69.

⁸⁴ The rhetoric in the Merneptah Stele is very close to that found in the chronicles of Tiglath-Pileser I, see A.K. GRAYSON, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Locust Valley, NY 1970) 189.

himself as the master of the land, Israel's "seed" is demolished. In the case of Exod 15, it is YHWH who is the master who sees to it that his people are safely and firmly planted.

Finally, the language of clan kinship is invoked as part of this ideological matrix through the appearance of נֶאֱמָר in v. 13. The נֶאֱמָר terminology is most commonly affixed to a kinsman who is able to guarantee the ongoing ownership of his family estate or clan land holdings, and thus return to his living kin the opportunity to connect with the ancestors buried in the land⁸⁵. The central role of this social position is attested in Jer 32,6-15, where the prophet becomes the redeemer of his cousin's tract of land, and an identical function of kinship can be found in the Jubilee legislation in Lev 25,24-32. Both of these passages derive from relatively late texts, but the content and focus of their discourse is rooted in rather antiquated ideas. The Leviticus passage is based on a very ancient practice that a later author deemed authoritative enough to legitimize his legal polemic⁸⁶. The same impulse is found in the Jeremiah passage, which relates to a time of great political turbulence but uses the ancient institution of the נֶאֱמָר as a means of concretizing an oracle of future restoration⁸⁷. In both cases, the idea of redemption connects the people to each other, to the land and ultimately to the divine, as YHWH is both the source of prophecy in the Jeremiah passage and the source of the legislation in Leviticus 25 (Lev 25,1). Exod 15 is consistent with the ideas embedded within these texts, as it too equates exhortation with a divine source and declares the regal nature of YHWH (Exod 15,2.18)⁸⁸.

⁸⁵ BERGSMA, *The Jubilee*, 65; VAN DER TOORN, *Family Religion*, 199-201; STAVRAKOPOULOU, *Land of our Fathers*, passim.

⁸⁶ BERGSMA, *The Jubilee*, 53-78, has made a strong case for the antiquity of the Jubilee tradition, though most scholars view the legislation itself as deriving from a considerably later period. For the relatively late date of the legislation in Leviticus 25 in particular, see B.M. LEVINSON, "The Manumission of Hermeneutics: The Slave Laws of the Pentateuch as a Challenge to Contemporary Pentateuchal Theory", *Congress Volume Leiden 2004* (ed. A. LEMAIRE) (VTS 109; Leiden 2006) 305-322.

⁸⁷ On the historical context for the origination and application of the Jeremiah passage (a distinction should be maintained between the two), see M. LEUCHTER, *The Polemics of Exile in Jeremiah 26-45* (New York – Cambridge 2008) 61-65.

⁸⁸ Indeed, Lev 25,1 subordinates the entirety of the legislation under the model of a royal decree; see recently G.A. RENDSBURG, "The Two Screens: On Mary Douglas's Proposal for a Literary Structure in the Book of Leviticus", *JSQ* 15 (2008) 181-182, drawing from an earlier suggestion made by Y. Muffs. See also J.L. MILGROM, *Leviticus 23-27* (AB; New York 2001) 2151-2152.

The language of the poem repeatedly takes up the language of Israel's kinship networks and the agrarian praxes that defined them. YHWH fights in Israel's battles against external threats, plants Israel's seed in the soil, resides alongside Israel in the hill country, and engages in acts of redemption. In deploying these terms, the theme of YHWH's divine kinship emerges. This is adopted as official ancestral doctrine when considered alongside the poet's initial declaration that YHWH is, indeed, an ancestral deity to whom subsequent generation must show filial piety (אלהי אבי וארממנהו in v. 2). Exod 15, then, attempts to incorporate the religion of the family and clan into the wider panoply of the national religious experience⁸⁹.

The notion of YHWH as a divine kinsman has often been noted as an important dimension of Israel's religious conception⁹⁰. The term is applied to YHWH most prominently in Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah (e.g., Isa 43,14; 63,16) in relation to greater theologies of national redemption⁹¹. Just as YHWH redeemed Israel at the dawn of its existence during the Exodus, so too does he redeem them alongside the rise of Persia. However, the אלה language is not simply a theological construct applied to late exilic or Persian era politics. A recent study by J. Untermann, for instance, addresses the social background of the concept⁹². Untermann notes, crucially, that the term applies to the blood-redeemer, i.e., a kinsman who defends the integrity and honor of the kinship group against an enemy or oppressive, violent force. Considering the emphasis in Exod 15 on YHWH's violent championing of Israel against external threat — a central tenet of kinship responsibility in the pre-exilic period⁹³ — the appearance of the אלה language therein (v. 13) is appropriate.

⁸⁹ So also MILLER, *The Divine Warrior*, 162-163.

⁹⁰ See among others P. NISKASEN, "YHWH as Father, Redeemer, and Potter in Isaiah 63:7-64:11", *CBQ* 68 (2006) 407; CROSS, *From Epic to Canon*, 6-7.

⁹¹ NISKASEN notes that the term אלה is rarely used for YHWH outside of Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah ("YHWH as Father, Redeemer, and Potter", 402), but he does cite Psalms 19 and 78 (the latter of which, as we have seen, is certainly pre-exilic) as among the sources beyond the Book of Isaiah where this term is applied. Niskasen does not discuss the function of the term in Exod 15,13.

⁹² J. UNTERMANN, "The Social-Legal Origin for the Image of God as Redeemer אלה of Israel", *Pomegranates and Golden Bells*. Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom (eds. D.P. WRIGHT – D.N. FREEDMAN – A. HURVITZ) (Winona Lake, IN 1995) 399-405.

⁹³ CROSS, *From Epic to Canon*, 4. It is precisely this expectation of defensive allegiance that the poet behind Judg 5 employs in his chiding of tribes

The concept of divine kinship redemption in Exod 15 carries an additional connotation, however, that suggests an early usage — it creates a sense of ethnic uniqueness that complements the deliberate adjustments to Canaanite mythopoesis earlier in the poem. In Exod 15, highland life connects the people to their patron on the same “ancestral” estate in a familial manner. This is not simply a mythic or ritual matter: by making Israel the kin of YHWH, the poem forever precludes the possibility that Israel’s kinship ties may be traced to the earlier Egypto-Canaanite culture⁹⁴. The recitation of the poem during festivals throughout the Israelite hinterland helped to delineate social boundaries as early Israel crystallized from the mixed multitudes that came together through common cause and creed. Those who partook in the building of communities upon the land could participate in the recitation of the poem at communal festivals. Those who recited the poem were thus liberated from “Egypt” through YHWH’s act of salvation and became his own kinsmen, and those who became kinsmen of YHWH became the kin of all Israel. In this way, families and clans in different regions and from different backgrounds could become a cohesive network. The עַם — the divinely redeemed kinship group (v. 13) — became עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל⁹⁵. This idea would indeed be ripe for re-use in the mid to late 6th century BCE as Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah’s audiences returned to the land, struggled to establish social cohesions and stability, and attempted to reconnect with the foundations of national memory.

who do not rise to the task. See L.E. STAGER, “The Song of Deborah: Why Some Tribes Answered the Call and Others Did Not”, *BAR* 15 (1989) 50-64.

⁹⁴ It is notable that the same attitude is not preserved regarding the majority of eastern nomads. Midian and Amalek eventually stand out as enemies; see SCHLOEN, “Casus Belli”, 38. Polemics against Moab, Ammon, Edom, and other groups surface especially within the Patriarchal tales in Genesis. But these tales do not deny ancient kinship commonalities shared between Israel and these other nations, whereas the repeated anti-Canaanite polemic fixes the ethnic gap.

⁹⁵ On עַם as a kinship term, see VAN DER TOORN, *Family Religion*, 200, 203-204. See also CROSS, *From Epic to Canon*, 11-13.

V. Implications for the Exodus Tradition

The foregoing discussion sheds light on current discussions regarding the Exodus as an historical event. Though the wide spectrum of Semitic experiences remained in the background of Israel's national consciousness and were eventually written into the Exodus narrative, the origins of the Exodus tradition itself are not to be found in the experience of a small group of Israelites who escaped from Egypt⁹⁶. They were experienced broadly through the regular conflict with Canaanite lowlanders heralding the memory of Egyptian hegemony in the region, and Exod 15 reveals that these experiences were enshrined into an enduring myth and liturgy⁹⁷. This provides some explanation for why Exod 15 was positioned as the very apex of the Exodus narrative but does not in itself contain any reference to an actual Exodus from Egypt⁹⁸. The more familiar narrative traditions regarding the Exodus emerge from the poem's influence on later writers⁹⁹, but the poem itself conceives of the "Exodus" as a metaphorical and mythic representation of the settlement and defense of Israelite

⁹⁶ For example, the putative "Moses group" discussed by N.K. GOTTWALD, *The Tribes of Yahweh. A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 BCE* (Maryknoll, NY 1979) 35-41.

⁹⁷ See the similar implications in CROSS, *CMHE*, 143, though CROSS seems to have in mind a genuine confrontation with Egyptians (*CMHE*, 131-132, 134, 137). Here I would offer an adjustment to J.J. COLLINS, "The Development of the Exodus Tradition", *Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition* (eds. J.W. VAN HENTEN – A. HOUTENPEN) (STAR 3; Assen 2001) 150-152, that sees the Sinai tradition as rooted in historical experience while the Exodus myth arose only from fleeting and bleak memories into a cohesive tradition during Jeroboam's reign. If the Exodus myth derives from the defense and settlement of the highlands by a league of clans with both Canaanite and Midianite-Kenite heritage (SCHLOEN, "Casus Belli"), then the Sinai tradition of the latter would have eventually been identified with the concept of the *הר נחל תך* in Exod 15,17 as Kenite-Midianites integrated into early Israelite communities of lowland origins. The specifics of this process are perhaps beyond recovery, but it is not necessary to choose the Sinai tradition over the Exodus tradition as the more historically rooted of the two or to view them as completely independent concepts.

⁹⁸ Pace S.C. RUSSELL, *Images of Egypt*, 148, 176.

⁹⁹ E.g., the model argued by COLLINS ("Exodus Tradition"), M.D. OBLATH, "Of Pharaohs and Kings: Whence the Exodus?", *JSOT* 87 (2000) 23-42, and others assigning the basic narrative to a Jeroboam propagandist.

land holdings in the central highlands. It is this dimension of the Exodus myth to which prophets like Hosea refer when reminding their audiences of the basis for the relationship between Israel and YHWH (e.g., Hos 2,15-17). Rather than re-interpreting the wilderness wandering traditions currently found in the Pentateuch, it reflects a concept of the highlands as an unsown מִדְּבָר to which YHWH led his people at the dawn of their relationship¹⁰⁰. It is for this reason that when Hosea castigates Ephraim as rejected by YHWH for their behavior (Hos 1,9), the threats he pronounces are eventually expressed in agrarian terms (Hos 9,16)¹⁰¹. Mythically speaking, the Exodus that forged the relationship between YHWH and Israel is inextricable from the eisodus into the highlands.

Emerging from this mythic understanding were stark categories both social and geographic. Israelite communities and the boundaries of their land holdings represented the created order emerging from YHWH's act of salvation. By contrast, the foreign nations and the lands surrounding Israel's territorial boundaries represented mythic chaos, swimming in the primordial waters and kept at bay only by Israel's fidelity to YHWH and the sanctity of their own social institutions¹⁰². So long as YHWH's domination of the primordial enemy (represented by Egypt in the poem) was recognized and ritually rehearsed, Israel would remain planted in the land and

¹⁰⁰ Compare to the Ugaritic cognate *mdbr* in CAT 1.23.65-69, depicted as an unsown region beyond the divine homestead; see M.S. SMITH, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism* (New York – Oxford 2001) 27-29. On Hosea's reference to Israel's wilderness meeting with YHWH, see H.D. NEEF, *Die Heilstraditionen Israels in der Verkündigung des Propheten Hosea* (BZAW 169; Berlin – New York 1987) 114-119. As NEEF notes, Hosea contrasts the "wilderness" tradition with the degeneration of religious standards entrenched in the land. In contrast to NEEF's view, however, Hosea does not appear to be reinterpreting a desert-wilderness tradition but is, rather, drawing from an enduring concept of the transformation of the highlands from an unsown מִדְּבָר to a cultivated homeland akin to the dichotomy already attested in the Ugaritic material.

¹⁰¹ So also the agrarian/horticultural imagery in the texts from Deut 32 and Jeremiah noted above.

¹⁰² See J.D. LEVENSON, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil* (San Francisco, CA 1988) 123. See also M.S. SMITH, "The Structure of Divinity at Ugarit and Israel", *Text, Artifact and Image: Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion* (ed. G. BECKMAN – T.J. LEWIS) (BJS 346; Providence, RI 2006) 46-47, for Canaanite antecedents.

safe within its boundaries. Those who could maintain the integrity of those boundaries and the social order within them would thus naturally hold cultic authority and be perceived as the agents of the deity who empowered Israel into existence. Such figures invariably stand behind the poem in its current form and are likely responsible for promulgating it within Israel's evolving cult as the atomism of individual kinship groups gave way to a greater sense of inter-lineage accountability and affiliation.

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SUMMARY

This study continues a line of inquiry from the author's previous essay regarding the 12th century BCE battle traditions embedded in the Song of Deborah (Judg 5) as the basis for a nascent Exodus ideology surfacing in the Song of the Sea (Exod 15). Exod 15 is identified as developing an agrarian ideal into a basis for national identity: Israel's successful struggles against competing Canaanite military forces echoing earlier Egyptian imperial hegemony is liturgized into a myth where YHWH defeats the Egyptian foe and then settles his own sacred agrarian estate.

Sir 38,1-15 als Beispiel der Verknüpfung von Tradition und Innovation bei Jesus Sirach

Mit Jesus Sirach, der ja nicht mehr zum Kanon der Hebräischen Bibel zählt, betreten wir ein Feld, auf dem man in besonderer Weise die Auseinandersetzung des frühen Judentums mit der neuen Geistesströmung des Hellenismus beobachten kann. Dabei wurde diesem Werk, vor allem seiner theologischen Relevanz über lange Zeit hinweg — wie ich meine: unverdientermaßen — nur recht wenig Interesse zuteil. Dies hat sich in den vergangenen zehn Jahren grundlegend geändert. Nach dem 1987 von Skehan und Di Lella veröffentlichten Kommentar zur Weisheit des Ben Sira sind inzwischen im deutschsprachigen Raum in relativ dichter Folge drei Kommentare zum Sirachbuch erschienen bzw. im Erscheinen begriffen¹.

Das neu erwachte Interesse am Sirachbuch zeigt sich auch anhand einer Reihe von in jüngerer Zeit veröffentlichten Monographien und Sammelbänden, die sich zentralen Themen des Buches, insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund zeitgenössischer hellenistischer Geistesströmungen widmen². In all diesen Werken wird eindringlich vor Augen geführt, dass man dem Buch Sirach nur dann gerecht wird, wenn man es vor dem Hintergrund des Anfang des 2. Jahrhun-

¹ P.W. SKEHAN-A.A. DI LELLA, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (AB 39; New York 1987); G. SAUER, *Jesus Sirach/Ben Sira* (ATD Apokryphen I; Göttingen 2000); J. SCHREINER, *Jesus Sirach 1-24* (NEB; Würzburg 2002); B.M. ZAPFF, *Jesus Sirach 25-51* (NEB; Würzburg 2010); J. MARBÖCK, *Jesus Sirach 1-23* (HBK; Freiburg 2010).

² Zum Thema vgl. besonders M. HENGEL, *Judentum und Hellenismus* (WUNT 10; Tübingen³ 1988); TH. MIDDENDORP, *Die Stellung Jesu Ben Siras zwischen Judentum und Hellenismus* (Leiden 1973); H.-V. KIEWELER, *Ben Sira zwischen Judentum und Hellenismus. Eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit Th. Middendorp* (Wien 1992); aus neuerer Zeit sind hier zu nennen: O. KAISER, *Zwischen Athen und Jerusalem* (BZAW 244; Berlin 2003); O. KAISER, *Des Menschen Glück und Gottes Gerechtigkeit. Studien zur biblischen Überlieferung im Kontext hellenistischer Philosophie* (Tübingen 2007); F. UEBERSCHAEER, *Weisheit in der Begegnung. Bildung nach dem Buch Jesus Sirach* (BZAW 379; Berlin 2007); U. WICKE-REUTER, *Göttliche Providenz und menschliche Verantwortung bei Ben Sira und in der Frühen Stoa* (BZAW 298; Berlin 2000).

derts v. Chr. in Palästina deutlich stärker werdenden Einflusses hellenistischen Geistes lesen lernt. Dabei geht es jedoch nicht um eine, wie man früher gelegentlich meinte³, radikale Entweder-Oder Positionierung Sirachs. Weder verfällt Sirach unreflektiert hellenistischem Geist, noch betreibt er eine Art Fundamentalopposition gegenüber jeglichen hellenistischen Einflüssen. Vielmehr gelingt es ihm in vielfältiger Weise, zentrale Überzeugungen des traditionellen Glaubens und der Überlieferungen Israels vor diesem neuen geistesgeschichtlichen Hintergrund zu formulieren, dabei ungewohnte gesellschaftliche und soziale Herausforderungen anzunehmen und damit seinen verunsicherten Glaubensgenossen Orientierung in einer gewandelten Welt zu geben.

Dies macht, wie ich meine, den besonderen Reiz aus, sich mit diesem späten deuterokanonischen bzw. apokryphen Werk zu beschäftigen. Ein Text, an dem sich dies besonders gut veranschaulichen lässt, ist die von Sirach in Kapitel 38,1-15 behandelte Frage nach der möglichen Konsultation eines Arztes⁴. Da sich gerade hier Sirach unter Heranziehung traditioneller jüdischer Überzeugungen und Glaubensvorstellungen einem neuen, im Zuge des andrängenden Hellenismus in Palästina etablierten Phänomen in positiver Weise nähert, kann dieser Text, wie sich zeigen wird, als konkrete Anwendung und Umsetzung seines andernorts im Sirachbuch vor dem Hintergrund biblischer Traditionen und stoischen Weltordnungsdenkens entfalteten Welt- und Gottesverständnisses dienen (vgl. insbesondere Sir 39,12-35)⁵.

³ Trotz wichtiger Erkenntnisse scheint auch A. STÖGER, "Der Arzt nach Jesus Sirach (38,1-15)", *Arzt und Christ* 11 (1965) 3-11, diese Auffassung zu vertreten, wenn er auf S.3 über Jesus Sirach in Anlehnung an A. Robert und A. Feuillet schreibt: "Sein 'Lehrbuch der praktischen Lebensphilosophie', aus den Heiligen Schriften und der Geschichte Israels zusammengestellt, im Gesetz verankert, in der literarischen Form der Weisheitssprüche und der Psalmen wiedergegeben, ist Wiederhall eines geistigen Erwachens, das jene Charaktere zu formen verstanden hat, die die Stoßkraft des siegreichen Hellenismus gebrochen haben".

⁴ Neben der Kommentarliteratur und gelegentlicher Erwähnung dieses Textes in einigen der genannten Monographien zu Jesus Sirach finden sich zu diesem Kapitel lediglich zwei neuere Aufsätze: STÖGER, *Arzt*, 3-11; D. LÜHRMANN, "Aber auch dem Arzt gib Raum (Sir 38,1-15)", *WuD* 15 (1979) 55-78.

⁵ Vgl. WICKE-REUTER, *Providenz*, 59-105.

I. Das Problem

Das Problem, das eine Begegnung mit dem neuen Phänomen der hellenistischen Medizin für den traditionellen jüdischen Glauben zur Zeit Sirachs aufwarf, wurde in der Literatur bereits mehrfach behandelt, so dass es hier nur in den wichtigsten Grundzügen skizziert werden muss⁶.

Im Unterschied zu den Hochkulturen Mesopotamiens⁷ und Ägyptens⁸, die über ein erstaunliches Maß an medizinischen Kenntnissen verfügten, beschränkte sich im Alten Israel Heilung auf äußere Anwendungen. So wird z.B. in Jes 1,6 die Versorgung von Wunden beschrieben, wenn davon die Rede ist, dass Wunden und Striemen ausgedrückt, verbunden und mit Olivenöl gelindert werden. Während im babylonischen und ägyptischen Bereich Priester auch ärztliche Funktionen ausübten, beschränkte sich die Aufgabe des israelitischen Priesters auf die Vermittlung einer heilen und damit heilenden Beziehung zu Gott bzw. die Feststellung der erfolgten Gesundung, vgl. z.B. Lev 13. Gelegentlich wird auch Propheten ein Heilungscharisma zugeschrieben, wenn etwa Jesaja in Jes 38,21 therapeutische Hinweise zur Versorgung des Geschwürs von König Hiskija gibt, dies allerdings in engem Zusammenwirken mit der Verheißung Jhwhs auf baldige Genesung. Einen eigenen Ärztestand hingegen gab es in Israel offensichtlich nicht. Zuständig bei Krankheit ist allein Jhwh, wie bereits der bekannte Text Ex 15,26 weiß, wo Jhwh mit den Worten zitiert wird: "Denn ich bin Jhwh dein Arzt" **כי אני יהוה רפאך**. Offensichtlich wurde das Aufsuchen von Ärzten, die ja den Beruf nicht im modernen, säkularen Sinn betrieben, sondern ihre Heilungsversuche oftmals mit magischen Prak-

⁶ Z.B. STÖGER, *Arzt*, 5.6; LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 55-57.

⁷ Ausführlich zum Thema, vgl. H.E. SIGERIST, *Anfänge der Medizin* (Zürich 1963) 345-493; so finden sich bereits im Codex Hamurapi des 18.Jhd. v. Chr. Honorarregelungen für Chirurgen, vgl. *Enzyklopädie Medizingeschichte*, (ed. W.E. GERABEK u.a.) (Berlin 2005) 105.

⁸ So berichtet Herodot davon, dass sich die ägyptischen Ärzte auf bestimmte Fachgebiete spezialisiert hätten: "Die Heilkunst ist bei ihnen wie folgt unterteilt: Für eine einzige Krankheit ist jeder Arzt zuständig und nicht für mehrere. Alles ist voll von Ärzten, denn die einen sind als Ärzte für die Augen eingesetzt, andere für den Kopf, andere für die Zähne, andere für den Unterleib und wieder andere für verborgene (gemeint sind wohl "innere", Anm. v. mir) Krankheiten", Herodot, *Historien II*, 84.

tiken und der Anrufung verschiedener heilender Gottheiten verbanden, als Konkurrenz zur Alleinverehrung Jhwhs verstanden. Besonders deutlich wird dies anhand von 2 Chr 16,12, einem Text, der wohl bereits aus hellenistischer Zeit stammt. Dort wird von König Asa von Juda berichtet, er habe in einer schweren Erkrankung an den Füßen nicht Jhwh, sondern die Ärzte aufgesucht. Wir erfahren daraus zweierlei: Nämlich, dass es damals in Jerusalem offenbar Ärzte gab, und dass der Gang zu ihnen vom chronistischen Theologen als Abfall von Jhwh gewertet wird. So spiegelt gerade 2 Chr 16,12 recht gut das Problem wieder, vor dem Jesus Sirach stand. Ist es einem Juden gestattet einen der Ärzte aufzusuchen, die, bedingt durch die Zugehörigkeit Palästinas zum hellenistischen, d.h. ptolemäischen bzw. seleukidischen Herrschaftsbereich, offenbar auch in Jerusalem anzutreffen waren?

Was aber hat es mit diesen im Zuge des Hellenismus auch im jüdischen Kulturkreis auftretenden Ärzten nun auf sich? Bekanntlich hat sich mit dem berühmten Arzt Hippokrates⁹, in Griechenland ein eigener Ärztestand entwickelt¹⁰, der Medizin als eine Art frühe Wissenschaft betrieb, insofern man sich nicht lediglich auf Symptombekämpfung beschränkte, sondern die Zusammenhänge zwischen verschiedenen Krankheitserscheinungen zu erforschen suchte. Bekannt sind insbesondere die "Epidemien" des Hippokrates¹¹, die knappe Beschreibungen von Krankheitsverläufen

⁹ Über die Lebensgeschichte des Hippokrates ist nur wenig bekannt. Er soll aus einer alten Asklepiadenfamilie stammen und in Kos die Krankengeschichten des Asklepiades-Heiligtums studiert haben. Danach war er vor allem als Wanderarzt tätig, wobei ihn seine Reisen bis an den Hof des persischen Königs Ataxerxes geführt haben sollen, vgl. W.U. ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin* (Heidelberg³2005) 29.

¹⁰ Bereits vor Hippokrates gab es medizinische Bemühungen in Griechenland. Man nennt diese Phase die "theurgische Medizin", die durchaus gewisse Ähnlichkeiten mit dem Verständnis von Krankheit im Alten Israel aufweist. So unterlag sie der Annahme, dass Krankheit und Gesundheit göttlichem Einfluss zuzuschreiben sind. "Theurgische Medizin" kann demnach als Wissenschaft vom göttlichen Heilshandeln aufgefasst werden. Ihre praktische Umsetzung erfolgt durch kultische Handlungen an gottgeweihten Stätten (Tempeln)", ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, 21; Ausdruck fanden diese Heilungsbemühungen vor allem im Asklepioskult.

¹¹ Sie bilden einen Teil des Corpus Hippocraticum. Dabei handelt es sich um ein Sammelwerk von mehr als 60 Einzelschriften, die allerdings nicht alle von Hippokrates selbst verfasst wurden. Ausführlicher ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, 29, 30.

und Informationen über die sie auslösenden Umweltbedingungen enthalten. Die Grundthese dabei war, dass jede Krankheit eine natürliche Ursache haben musste¹². Eine wichtige Rolle spielte nicht zuletzt die Frage nach dem richtigen Zeitpunkt der Behandlung¹³. So war es Aufgabe des Arztes abzuschätzen, wann und mit welchen Mitteln er am besten eingreifen sollte. Die Krankheit wurde mit Arzneien bekämpft, die der Arzt selbst aus Pflanzen zubereitete, hinzu kamen diätetische Regeln zur Therapie, aber auch zur Erhaltung der Gesundheit¹⁴. Trotz dieses empirisch geprägten Rationalismus des hellenistischen Ärzteswesens verblieb dennoch eine religiöse Rückbindung. Besonders deutlich wird dies an den zahlreichen Asklepiosheiligtümern im hellenistischen Bereich. Zu nennen ist hier etwa ein wichtiges medizinisches Ausbildungszentrum am Asklepiosheiligtum auf der Insel Kos. Bei Krankheit begab man sich zu einem solchen Heiligtum, die sich übrigens großer Beliebtheit erfreuten, zumal dort in Asklepios ein vergött-

¹² Die hippokratische Medizin umfasst dabei vier zentrale Elemente des ärztlichen Handelns: 1. das Einbeziehen schriftlich überlieferter ärztlicher Empirie, 2. die genaue, differenzierte Beobachtung am Krankenbett, 3. eine Prognosebildung auf der Grundlage dieser Elemente und 4. therapeutische Maßnahmen (diätetisch, medikamentös, chirurgisch), vgl. ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, 30. Hinsichtlich einer natürlichen Erklärung der Krankheiten liest man beispielsweise in der hippokratischen Schrift über die Epilepsie: "Nach meiner Ansicht ist diese Krankheit in gar keiner Beziehung göttlicher oder heiliger als die anderen Krankheiten, sondern das Wesen ihrer Entstehung ist dasselbe wie bei den anderen Krankheiten ..." (Kapitel 2), "Schuld an diesem Leiden ist das Gehirn, wie auch an den anderen schwersten (Geistes-) Krankheiten", ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, 32.

¹³ Dieser Zeitpunkt ist im Zusammenhang mit der hippokratischen Lehre der Krisis zu sehen. Darunter versteht man die entscheidende Phase der Krankheit, d.h. der Zeitraum, in dem sich der Zustand des Patienten entweder durch die Hilfe des Arztes und/oder durch die Heilkraft der Natur zum Besseren oder zum Schlechteren wendet. Jede Krankheitserscheinung weist in ihrem Verlauf mindestens eine solche Krisis auf. Daneben galten Tage im Krankheitsverlauf als besondere, kritische Tage, die dem Arzt entscheidende prognostische Hinweise gaben (z.B. der 4.;7.;11.; 14. Tag), ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, 34.

¹⁴ Dabei war die antike "Diaita" auf ein Gleichmaß ausgerichtet, auf eine Ordnung des Lebens, die neben Speise und Trank auch Arbeit und Ruhe, Schlafen und Wachen, Ausscheidungen und Absonderungen sowie die Zustände des Gemüts mit einbezog, vgl. ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, 33.

lichter Heroe verehrt wurde, der als heilende Gottheit und zugleich als der menschenfreundlichste Gott galt. Daneben gab es jedoch auch "säkulare" Ärzte, die nicht in einem direkten Bezug zu einem Asklepiosheiligtum standen, also keine Priester waren, aber durchaus auch zu Asklepios beteten¹⁵. D.h. so etwas wie eine "säkulare" Medizin im modernen Sinn gab es, wie bereits gesagt, trotz allem Rationalismus damals nicht.

Es stellt sich vor diesem Hintergrund nun die Frage, wie sich die Situation zur Zeit Sirachs in Jerusalem darstellte. Aufgrund der Beschreibung des Arztes in Sir 38,1-15, der offenbar hohe gesellschaftliche Reputation genoss¹⁶, eine Diagnose anstellte und sich pflanzlicher Heilmittel bediente, ist damit zu rechnen, dass Sirach mit Ärzten hellenistischer Prägung in Kontakt kam. Diese werden wohl vor allem Wanderärzte gewesen sein, obwohl die von Sirach als selbstverständlich vorausgesetzte Möglichkeit, einen Arzt konsultieren zu können, dafür spricht, dass sich solche mehr oder weniger permanent in Jerusalem aufhielten. Tatsächlich entstand "aus dem Bestreben der Städte heraus, einen guten Arzt auf Dauer an sich zu binden ... das Amt des 'öffentlichen Arztes', der von der Gemeinde bezahlt wurde, sich aber auch seine Leistungen von den Patienten bezahlen ließ"¹⁷. Es ist durchaus denkbar, dass die Ende des 3./Anfang des 2. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. zunehmend hellenisierten Kreise der jüdischen Oberschicht solches auch für Jerusalem anstrebten. Ob man neben solchen Ärzten bereits damals auch die Existenz eines Asklepios in Jerusalem voraussetzen kann, dürfte hingegen wohl eher fraglich sein. Aller-

¹⁵ Ausführlich H. AVALOS, *Illness and Health Care in the Ancient Near East. The Role of the Temple in Greece, Mesopotamia and Israel* (Atlanta, GA 1995) 56-92.

¹⁶ Vgl. Sir 38,2; eine solche hohe Wertschätzung des Arztes zeichnet in besonderer Weise den griechischen Arzt aus, vgl. SIGERIST, *Anfänge*, 723: "der Arzt wurde daher von allen Handwerkern am höchsten geschätzt. Außerdem galt die Medizin insofern als *techné*, als eine besondere Art Handwerk oder eine Kunst, je nachdem wie wir das Wort übersetzen, indem sie auf einer Philosophie beruhte".

¹⁷ *Enzyklopädie Medizingeschichte*, 105; so schreibt beispielsweise Herodot über einen gewissen Demokedes: "nachdem er sich hier (in Aigina, Anm. v. mir) niedergelassen hatte, übertraf er schon im ersten Jahr alle anderen Ärzte ... Im zweiten Jahr stellten ihn die Aigineten auf Staatskosten für ein Talent ein, im dritten Jahr die Athener für hundert Minen, im dritten Jahr Polykrates für zwei Talente", Herodot, *Historien III*, 131.

dings scheint sich in der Gegend der Betestateiche, deren südlicher Teil wohl von Simeon II. angelegt wurde¹⁸, tatsächlich eine Art Heilungszentrum befunden zu haben, wovon zumindest für das 1. Jhd. n. Chr. die Heilung des Gelähmten durch Jesus in Joh 5,1-9 Zeugnis ablegt. Für die spätrömische Zeit ist dann dort in jedem Fall ein Asklepiion vorauszusetzen¹⁹. Wie auch immer, ich halte es für alles andere als ausgemacht, dass es sich, wie Hogan schreibt²⁰, bei den von Sirach beschriebenen Ärzten notwendigerweise um jüdische Ärzte gehandelt haben muss, die ihre Ausbildung in Alexandrien erhalten haben, wo es ja ein wichtiges Ausbildungszentrum für hippokratische Medizin gab. Es ist ja auffällig, dass Sirach eine Unterscheidung zwischen jüdischen und nichtjüdischen Ärzten nicht trifft, wiewohl es unter den sicher in Mehrzahl zur Auswahl stehenden Ärzten gewiss auch nichtjüdische Ärzte gab. Das Problem, dass ein solcher Arzt auch eine andere Gottheit, vor allem Asklepios verehren könnte, kommt überhaupt nicht in den Blick! Dies mag zwar angesichts der Tatsache, dass hippokratische Ärzte, die nicht als Priester an einem Asklepiosheiligtum amtierten, "säkularer" erschienen²¹, gemindert sein, ist aber angesichts der Vorbehalte des traditionellen Judentums gegenüber dem Aufsuchen eines Arztes, weil dieser sich für seine Heilung möglicherweise auch an andere Gottheiten wandte, zumindest erstaunlich. Die Antwort könnte nicht nur in dem selbstverständlichen Monotheismus des Sirach zu finden sein, wonach möglicherweise jedes Gebet des Menschen dem einen Gott gilt, sondern auch in der Weltsicht des Sirach, derzufolge nach dem Willen des Schöpfers alles, auch der Arzt, sei er nun Jude oder Heide, seinen Platz hat. Dass dies nicht einfach Spekulation ist, sondern in der Souveränität der Theologie Sirachs verwurzelt ist, wird sich im Rahmen der Exegese zeigen.

¹⁸ Vgl. Sir 50,3.

¹⁹ Entsprechend archäologischer Funde; ausführlich bei M. KÜCHLER, *Jerusalem. Ein Handbuch und Studienreiseführer zur Heiligen Stadt* (Göttingen 2007) 325-328.

²⁰ L.P. HOGAN, *Healing in the Second Temple Period* (Göttingen 1992) 48: "It is unthinkable that Ben Sira has in mind pagan physicians since he tells us that the physicians intercede before God for healing (V. 14)".

²¹ Zum Problem vgl. AVALOS, *Illness*, 85: "We have argued that the boundaries between secular and religious therapy cannot always be drawn so neatly" und "... the mention of non-supernatural factors (wie in der hippokratischen Tradition, Anm. v. mir) did not mean that supernatural ones were not assumed".

II. Die Textversionen von Sir 38,1-15: Versuch einer Deutung

Einige Hinweise zu den verschiedenen Textversionen von Sir 38,1-15²²:

- V. 1: Während Ms B dazu auffordert "sich mit dem Arzt zu befreunden", mahnen LXX und S lediglich dazu, den Arzt zu "ehren". Lührmann sucht diesen Unterschied dergestalt zu erklären, dass in der fortgeschrittenen Zeit des Enkels Sirachs der Umgang mit dem Arzt einerseits selbstverständlich war, andererseits auch die Schattenseiten der Medizin bekannt waren, demnach dazu aufgefordert werden musste, den Arzt "zu ehren"²³. Hogan hingegen versucht das Problem nach einem Vorschlag Segals semantisch zu lösen. Demnach könne das hebräische לְהַחֲדוֹת entsprechend rabbinischer Quellen ebenfalls im Sinne von "ehren" verstanden werden²⁴. Die von Rahlfs dokumentierte Ergänzung "mit seinen Ehren" (Septuaginta Deutsch²⁵: "mit seinen Verdiensten") unterstreicht diese Aufforderung und legt nahe, dass sich damit auch der Gedanke eines Honorars verbindet, das, wie gesehen, Patienten bereits damals dem Arzt für seine Dienstleistungen zu zahlen hatten²⁶.
- V. 2: In V. 2 zeigt LXX einen auffälligen Unterschied gegenüber der hebräischen Fassung, insofern hier dezidiert die Heilung dem Wirken Gottes zugeschrieben wird. Vermutlich steht dahinter eine wieder mehr der traditionellen Sicht entsprechende, eher negativere Beurteilung (siehe auch V. 15) des Arztes, die es nicht mehr angemessen erscheinen lässt, diesen als von Gott mit "Weisheit" begabt zu bezeichnen.
- V. 4: Während die hebräische Version entsprechend Gen 1,12 eine Mitwirkung der Erde beim Hervorbringen der Heilpflanzen voraussetzt, spricht die griechische Version von einer direkten Erschaffung der Heilmittel seitens Gottes aus der Erde: ἐκτίσεν. Ähnlich wie beim Arzt in V. 2 tendiert offenbar auch hier die

²² Die Bemerkungen zu den Textversionen nehmen auf folgende Quellenausgaben Bezug: Ms B/Ms D, P.C. BEENTJES, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew* (VTS 68SBL; Atlanta, GA 2006); Lxx *Bible-Works* 8; S F. VATTIONI, *Ecclesiastico* (Napoli 1968).

²³ LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 67.

²⁴ HOGAN, *Healing*, 42.

²⁵ *Septuaginta Deutsch*. Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung (eds. W. KRAUS - M. KARRER) (Stuttgart 2009).

²⁶ So bereits STÖGER, *Arzt*, 5.

griechische Fassung dazu, das direkte Handeln Gottes im Kontext der Heilung ohne jegliche Mittlerschaft zu betonen.

- V. 7: Ein solches direktes Wirken Gottes setzt offenbar auch die griechische Fassung von V. 7 voraus, wo durch die Tilgung des Arztes als Subjekt Gott selbst Heilender ist und den Schmerz des Kranken lindert.
- V. 10: In V. 10 konkretisiert die hebräische Fassung die geforderte Abwendung vom Bösen, insofern sie von "Parteilichkeit vor Gericht" spricht²⁷, welche tunlichst zu fliehen ist.
- V. 11: Auffällig ist die Änderung, die die syrische Fassung in V. 11 vornimmt. Wie man auch an anderer Stelle in der syrischen Fassung des Jesus Sirach beobachten kann, lässt der Übersetzer häufig konkrete Anweisungen zur Darbringung von Opfern unübersetzt. Dies ist beispielsweise in Sir 35,8 der Fall. Dort liest LXX: "Die Opfergabe des Gerechten macht den Altar glänzend von Fett und ihr Wohlgeruch steigt zum Höchsten auf", während die Fassung von S lautet: "Die Gaben der Gerechten sind das Gebet ihres Mundes und ihre Taten dringen in den Himmel". D.h. S nimmt offensichtlich eine grundsätzlich opferkritische Haltung ein. Eine solche schlägt sich auch an unserer Stelle nieder, wenn S V. 11 unübersetzt lässt und stattdessen hier die modifizierte Übersetzung der hebräischen VV. 13b und 14 einfügt, jene Versteile also, die in der hebräischen Fassung vom Gebet des Arztes und dem von Gott gegebenen Erfolg sprechen. Hingegen deutet S das Gebet als Gebet des Patienten und der Erfolg der Heilung wird ganz Gott zugeschrieben, insofern "seine Hand" sich nun nicht auf den Arzt, sondern auf Gott bezieht. Ähnlich wie in Sir 35,8 ersetzt also auch hier die syrische Übersetzung ein vom hebräischen bzw. griechischen Text vorgegebenes Opferhandeln durch Gebet. Mit einem Gebet des Arztes allerdings kann S nicht viel anfangen.
- V. 15: Überraschend ist schließlich der Unterschied zwischen der hebräischen und griechischen Fassung in V. 15. Während die hebräische Fassung das Großtun vor dem Arzt, also offensichtlich die Ablehnung des Arztes, als Sünde gegen den Schöpfer brandmarkt, versteht es die griechische Fassung – und mit ihr der Syrer – als eine Bestrafung der Sünden, sich in die Hand eines Arztes begeben zu müssen.

²⁷ Nach LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 65, zeigt sich hier eine weitere Abhängigkeit Sirachs von weisheitlicher Tradition, insofern er als Hauptübel die parteiliche Voreingenommenheit (vgl. Spr 24,23; 17,15; 18,5, auch Dtn 1,17; 16,19) wahrnimmt.

Tatsächlich entspricht die hebräische Fassung eher der gesamten Tendenz des Textes, den Arzt als positive, von Gott geschaffene Größe der Schöpfung zu sehen, während die griechische Fassung dieses positive Urteil wieder ein Stück weit zurücknimmt. Dies spricht dafür, dass hier die hebräische Version von Ms B insgesamt dem Ursprungstext näher steht als die griechische Übersetzung. Deren negative Beurteilung des Arztes in V. 15 trifft sich umgekehrt mit der Tendenz der anderen aufgewiesenen Modifikationen des griechischen Textes, wenn dort gegenüber der hebräischen Textfassung und in Abschwächung des ärztlichen Tuns das direkte heilende und rettende Handeln Gottes betont wird. Dahinter stehen möglicherweise negative Erfahrungen mit Ärzten, aber auch die offenbar starke, ärztlichem Handeln gegenüber kritische jüdische Tradition²⁸, der in Gestalt des Enkels Sirachs die kühnen Thesen seines Großvaters zu weit gingen.

III. Wesentliche Züge der Argumentation Sirachs

1. Kontext und Struktur von Sir 38,1-15

Für die Interpretation des Textes ist nicht zuletzt seine Stellung in seinem näheren Kontext in den Blick zu nehmen. Trotz vielfältiger Versuche ist es bisher noch nicht gelungen, eine überzeugende Feinstrukturierung des Sirachbuches ausmachen zu können²⁹. Die behandelten Themen scheinen vielmehr ineinander überzugehen. Der Zusammenhang ist dabei meistens eher assoziativ als von einer klaren Themenführung her bestimmt. Lediglich die Ausführungen über die Weisheit in Sir 1, Sir 24 und die abschließende Veranschaulichung der Herrlichkeit Gottes in Schöpfung und Geschichte, die in Sir 50 in der Gestalt des Hohenpriesters Simeon ihr Ziel findet, der wiederum so etwas wie eine Inkarnation der Weisheit ist, gibt dem ganzen Buch eine gewisse Gesamtstruktur.

²⁸ Vgl. dazu die bereits von STÖGER, *Arzt*, 6, notierte Beobachtung, wonach sich die Ablehnung von LXX gegenüber Ärzten auch anderweitig nachweisen lässt. So liest MT in Ps 88,11: "Wirst du an den Toten Wunder tun? Oder werden Schatten aufstehen, um dich zu preisen?" während G den Vers folgendermaßen übersetzt (Ps 87LXX): "Wirst du etwa an den Toten Wundertaten vollbringen? Oder werden Ärzte (sie) aufstehen lassen, und sie werden dich preisen?"

²⁹ Zur Problematik vgl. MARBÖCK, *Jesus Sirach*, 27.

Im Hinblick auf das Kapitel des Arztes ist dies ein wenig anders. Das Kapitel wird nämlich durch zwei Texte gerahmt, die in einem gewissen thematischen Duktus stehen. So widmen sich Sir 37,27-31 der Gesundheitsvorsorge, die zu einem maßvollen und überlegten Essensgenuss rät. Wie bereits Lührmann deutlich gemacht hat, spiegelt sich hier das auch im Corpus Hippocrates anzutreffende diätetische Prinzip als wirkungsvolle Behandlungsmethode³⁰, wiewohl dieses bei Sirach nur einer klugen Prophylaxe, nicht der Behandlung der Krankheit selbst dient. Das hier außerdem anklingende Prinzip der rechten Unterscheidung verbindet Sir 37,27-31 mit dem vorangehenden Abschnitt Sir 36,23-37,26, in dem es ebenfalls um die Discretio hinsichtlich verschiedener Sujets geht³¹. So werden hier etwa die Wahl der richtigen Frau, des richtigen Freundes oder des geeigneten Beraters thematisiert und abschließend Kriterien benannt, woran man den wahren Weisen erkennt. Die sich in Sir 37,27-31 anschließenden prophylaktischen Maßnahmen zur Erhaltung der Gesundheit, in denen von "Genüssen" die Rede ist, an denen sich auch der Weise in Sir 37,24 sättigt, sind damit ebenfalls Ausweis eines solchen weisen Verhaltens. An dieses schließt sich nun in Sir 38,1-15 ein Abschnitt an, aus dem hervorgeht, wie ein dergestalt charakterisierter Weiser sich in dem Fall verhält, wo er trotz kluger Sorge um die eigene Gesundheit von einer Krankheit befallen wird. Auch hier gilt es, wie gleich zu zeigen sein wird, in kluger Unterscheidung zu agieren. An den Abschnitt über den Arzt schließen sich in Sir 38,16-23 wiederum assoziativ Ausführungen für den Fall an, dass der Arzt nicht helfen konnte³². Es geht hier näherhin um das rechte Verhalten im Trauerfall. Dabei klingt, ähnlich wie in Sir 37,27-31 auch in Sir 38,18-21 das Thema der Sorge für die eigene Gesundheit an, wenn vor übermäßigem Trauern gewarnt wird und jeglichem fortwährenden trauernden Gedenken an den Toten mit dem Hinweis begegnet wird, sich dadurch nicht die eigene Zukunft zu verbauen und im Grunde selbst zu schaden (vgl. VV. 21.22). D.h. Sir 38,1-15 ist mehr oder weniger gerahmt durch Texte, die die eigene Gesundheitsvorsorge im Blick haben.

³⁰ LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 67.

³¹ ZAPFF, *Sirach*, 242-251.

³² ZAPFF, *Sirach*, 253.

Sir 38,1-15 selbst lässt sich in drei Teile gliedern³³. In den VV. 1-8 finden sich Hinweise zum grundsätzlichen Verhalten gegenüber dem Arzt, während in den VV. 9-14 konkrete Verhaltensregeln im Fall einer tatsächlich eingetretenen Krankheit folgen. V. 15 stellt schließlich als dritter Teil eine Art “summary appraisal” dar. In der hebräischen Fassung geht es dabei, wie gezeigt, um eine negative Wertung einer Ablehnung des Arztes, in der griechischen Fassung um eine Erklärung des Phänomens Krankheit entsprechend traditioneller Auffassung.

2. *Von der Schöpfungsordnung zum Handeln: VV. 1-8*

V. 1a beinhaltet zunächst eine allgemeine Mahnung bezüglich des Verhaltens gegenüber dem Arzt, während die VV. 1b-8 verschiedene Begründungen für die empfohlene Wertschätzung des Arztes geben. Dabei fällt eine zweifache Argumentationsstruktur auf. Die eine ist schöpfungsmäßig orientiert, die andere hingegen bezieht sich auf die Erfahrungsebene im geschichtlichen Bereich. Drei Mal lässt sich dieser Argumentationsbogen verfolgen. So geht es in VV. 1b.2a um die Erschaffung und Ausrüstung des Arztes, in VV. 2b.3 hingegen um die Reputation, die dem Arzt von menschlicher Seite zuteil wird. Ähnliches gilt für die V. 4 und 5. V. 4 nimmt auf die Erschaffung der heilvollen Pflanzen in Gen 1,12 Bezug, V. 5 auf deren Nutzung im geschichtlichen Bereich, expliziert an der durch das Holz bewirkten Verwandlung des bitteren Wassers in trinkbares Wasser in Ex 15,25. Dadurch wiederum manifestiert sich die in der Schöpfung durch Gott angelegte heilende Kraft der Pflanzen im Handeln des Menschen. Dies findet seine Fortsetzung in VV. 6 und 7. Wiederum wird in V. 6 auf eine besondere Eigenart des menschlichen Wesens reflektiert, die in seiner Erschaffung durch Gott resultiert, wenn davon die Rede ist, dass Gott dem Menschen Einsicht gab. Eine Konkretisierung — wiederum im Anwendungsbereich — findet sich im anschließend geschilderten Handeln des Arztes und des Salbenmischers. D.h. in allen drei Fällen entspricht der von Gott etablierten Schöpfungsordnung ein Handeln auf Seiten des Menschen, der sich an dieser Schöpfungsordnung orientiert.

Hinzu kommt ein zweites. Insofern Arzt und Salbenmischer diese von Gott dem Menschen gegebene “Einsicht” *בִּינָה* aktua-

³³ Vgl. LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 59.

lisieren, werden sie jenem “einsichtigen Mann” גבר מבין in V. 4 gleich, welcher die Heilmittel, die Gott aus der Erde sprießen lässt, nicht verschmäht. Dabei aber stellt sich durch diesen Zusammenhang die Frage, ob der Arzt zusammen mit dem Salbenmischer nicht auf dieselbe Ebene wie Mose gestellt werden soll, der entsprechend der strukturellen Abfolge ja eben jener einsichtige Mann war, welcher entsprechend V. 5 durch das Stück Holz die Wasser süß machte (vgl. Ex 15,25). Dass es für die Annahme einer solchen bewusst hergestellten Beziehung weitere Indizien gibt, wird sich später noch zeigen.

3. Der Arzt und die Weltordnung: *VV. 1-8*

Zu einzelnen Aussagen des Abschnittes, die besondere Aufmerksamkeit verdienen, einige Anmerkungen. An erster Stelle ist hier V. 1 zu nennen. Zwei für die Theologie des Sirach zentrale Stichworte erscheinen hier: צרכו “sein Bedarf” und חלק “er hat zugeteilt”. LXX übersetzt hier “wegen seiner Notwendigkeiten” πρὸς τὰς χρείας αὐτοῦ bzw. “er hat ihn erschaffen” ἔκτισεν. Besonders im Hinblick auf die erste Übersetzung verwischt LXX ein wenig den ursprünglichen Sinn. Dieser erschließt sich, wenn man Sir 39,16b heranzieht, wo sich in besonderer Weise das stoisch beeinflusste Weltordnungsdenken Sirachs widerspiegelt³⁴. Dort spricht Ms B davon, dass “jeder Bedarf zu seiner Zeit Überfluss hat”. Ausgehend von diesem Text bedeutet dies, dass es hier nicht in erster Linie um den Bedarf geht, den ein Patient hinsichtlich der Konsultierung eines Arztes hat, sondern um die Zweckhaftigkeit, die ein Arzt im Kontext des Weltganzen nach dem Willen des Schöpfers besitzt und somit auch ihm einen sinnvollen Platz in der Weltordnung zuweist. “Vor seinem Bedarf” heißt dann, dass die freundschaftlichen Beziehungen zum Arzt bereits dann geknüpft werden sollen, bevor seine Zweckhaftigkeit im Krankheitsfall zutage tritt. Denn es gilt eben, wie Sir 39,21 formuliert: “alles ist für seinen Bedarf erwählt” כִּי הַכֹּל לְצָרְכּוֹ נִבְחַר.

Ähnliches gilt für die zweite hier verwendete Wurzel “er hat zugeteilt” חלק. Auch durch sie wird der Arzt als Teil der von Sirach grundsätzlich positiv gewerteten Schöpfung verstanden. In ähn-

³⁴ Vgl. WICKE-REUTER, *Providenz*, 72.

licher Weise wird חֶלֶק — diesmal allerdings als Nomen i.S. von “Zuteilung” — in Sir 41,4 verwendet. Dort ist davon die Rede, dass der Tod die “Zuteilung” ist, welche Gott allem Fleisch auferlegt hat, demnach zur Schöpfungsordnung gehört und es sinnlos wäre, sich diesem zu widersetzen. So sehr das Denken Sirachs auch hier von einem stoischen Weltordnungsdenken bestimmt ist, so setzt er sich doch wiederum klar davon ab, indem er mit der jüdischen Tradition selbstverständlich von einem persönlichen, der Schöpfung gegenüberstehenden Schöpfergott ausgeht. Dass der hebräische Text hier von “Zuteilung” spricht, mag außerdem ein Vorverweis auf den dem Arzt zukommenden Anteil der Weisheit bzw. der ihm von Königen zuteil werdenden Geschenke sein. Dabei sind letztere, wie bereits gesagt, nichts anderes als eine Bestätigung seiner Zweckhaftigkeit im Gesamt der Schöpfung.

In V. 2 geht es um die Begabung des Arztes, und zwar in doppelter Weise. Einmal von Gott und dann vom König her, der in gewisser Hinsicht als irdischer Stellvertreter Gottes gelten darf³⁵. Entsprechend Sir 1,9 hat Gott über seine Schöpfungswerke Weisheit ausgegossen. Wer also diese Aussage grundsätzlich akzeptiert, kann sie für den Arzt als Schöpfungswerk Gottes nicht negieren. Insofern kann ärztliche Kunst nicht in Gegensatz zu Gott treten, da der Arzt zum Mittler göttlicher Weisheit wird. Der Arzt tritt damit dem weisen Schriftgelehrten zur Seite³⁶, der entsprechend Sir 39,6 von Gott her mit dem Geist der Einsicht erfüllt wird und der ebenfalls Reputation seitens der Menschen erfährt, insofern die Gemeinde seine Weisheit lobt (vgl. Sir 39,9-11). Auf diese Parallelisierung wird an anderer Stelle nochmals zurückzukommen sein.

In V. 4 liegt wiederum eine Verbindung zwischen biblischer Schöpfungstheologie und stoischem Weltordnungsdenken vor. Zunächst greift V. 4a, wie unschwer zu erkennen ist, auf Gen 1,12a zurück. Er modifiziert allerdings die dortige Aussage dergestalt, dass nicht auf Anordnung Gottes lediglich die Erde Pflanzen hervorgehen lässt — “die Erde möge hervorbringen” וְהַצֵּא הָאָרֶץ —, sondern Gott selbst in direkter Handlung es ist, der Heilmittel aus der Erde hervorgehen lässt und zwar über die uranfängliche Schöp-

³⁵ Dass Ärzte in besonderen Dienstverhältnissen standen und auch an Königshöfen tätig waren, weiß bereits Herodot, *Historien III*, 131, aber auch Josephus, *Bell. Jud. I*, 657 zu berichten.

³⁶ LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 61.

fung hinaus als eine Art *creatio continua*: מַאֲרֵץ מוֹצִיָּה תְּרֻפּוֹת³⁷. Gott wird damit aber in ganz enger Weise als Schöpfer und Ursprung der Heilmittel ausgemacht, wiewohl die Erde daran beteiligt ist. So wird sichergestellt, dass nicht der Arzt, sondern Gott Heilender bleibt, sich der Arzt also lediglich der von Gott eingerichteten Schöpfungsordnung bedient. V. 4b zieht daraus die Konsequenz: Ein Einsichtiger, im Sinne eines rational und klug handelnden Menschen, orientiert sich an dieser von Gott begründeten heilvollen Naturordnung und sucht ihr im eigenen Handeln zu entsprechen. Auch dies liegt auf der Linie stoischen Denkens, wenn es etwa im Zeushymnus des Kleantes über die Bösewichte heißt: “Folgten sie ihr (gemeint ist die gültige Satzung der Gottheit, Anm. v. mir) vernünftig, sie führten ein glückliches Leben”³⁸. Die Negativaussage “verwirft nicht” אֵל יִמָּאֵס, erinnert an alttestamentliche Texte, wo von einem “Verwerfen Gottes” oder seiner Weisungen gesprochen wird, vgl. z.B. 1 Sam 10,19; Jer 6,19. Damit aber kommt zum Ausdruck, dass die Verwerfung solcher von Gott geschenkter Heilmittel im Grunde einer Verachtung des Heilswillens Gottes und damit einer Verwerfung Gottes gleichkommt³⁹. So klingt bereits hier jener Grundgedanke an, den dann die Zusammenfassung in V. 15 entsprechend der hebräischen Fassung formuliert, wonach ein “Groß-tun vor dem Arzt” zur Sünde gegen den Schöpfer wird. Dieser allgemeine, schöpfungsmäßig begründete Grundsatz von V. 4 wird in V. 5 durch den Bezug auf die Wasserwundererzählung in Ex 15,25 vorbildhaft unterstrichen. Dabei geht es hier nicht um das eigentlich Wunderbare dieser Erzählung, sondern lediglich darum, dass sich Mose aufgrund des Hinweises Gottes eines Stückes Holz als Mittel bediente, um das Wasser “süß” zu machen. Der Rückgriff auf diese Erzählung ist klug gewählt, findet sich doch gerade in Ex 15,26 jener bereits zitierte Grundsatz des Glaubens Israels, dass JHWH der Arzt Israels ist. Wie Mose, so ist auch der Arzt demnach nichts anderes als Vollzugsorgan des heilenden Jhwh, hat also in Mose, wie bereits oben kurz angedeutet, eine Art Paradigma.

³⁷ Vergleichbares hat WICKE-REUTER, *Providenz*, 72 für das Verständnis von Sir 39,16 deutlich machen können.

³⁸ Zit. nach EBENER, *Dichtungen*.

³⁹ Ähnliches geschieht in Sir 41,4. Dort wird ein Nichtakzeptieren des Todesgeschicks mit einem Verwerfen der Weisung des Höchsten gleichgesetzt: וְמָה תִּמָּאֵס בְּתוֹרַת עֲלִיּוֹן.

Die Parallelisierung des Arztes mit dem Salbenmischer, dem רוקח in V. 7, dient ebenso der Aufwertung des Arztes. Denn im Unterschied zum Arzt erfreute sich der Salbenmischer — worunter übrigens nicht ein früher Apotheker zu verstehen ist!⁴⁰ — hoher Wertschätzung. Im Grund wirkt er ähnlich wie der Arzt, dienen doch seine Salben ebenso dem Wohlbefinden und Heil des Menschen. So wurden seine ebenfalls aus Pflanzen gewonnenen Produkte für Kult und Kosmetik verwendet. Lührmann fasst die Argumentation Sirachs deshalb folgendermaßen zusammen: “Gibt es gegenüber dem Salbenmischer keine religiösen Vorbehalte, warum dann solche gegenüber dem Arzt?”⁴¹.

4. Patient, Arzt und Gott: eine Verhältnisbestimmung (VV. 9-14)

Der zweite Abschnitt VV. 9-14 gliedert sich in zwei Teile. VV. 9-11 betreffen den religiösen Bereich und sehen als Voraussetzung der körperlichen Heilung eine vorherige Heilung des Verhältnisses zu Gott. In VV. 12-14 wird im Anschluss die Frage geklärt, inwiefern die Hinzuziehung eines Arztes zum Gottesverhältnis nicht in Konkurrenz tritt, sondern gerade der Hoffnung auf das Heilswirken Gottes entspricht.

VV. 9-11 folgt einem Dreischritt: V. 9 Hinwendung zu Gott, V. 10 Abwendung vom Bösen in Tat und Intention und V. 11 aktives kultisches Handeln, das Sühne bewirkt. Dieses Verhalten folgt also durchaus traditionellem Denken, das die Ursache der Krankheit in einem gestörten Gottesverhältnis sucht⁴², bzw. Gott als den einzigen betrachtet, der heilen kann. Ausdrücklich formuliert dies V. 9 und zwar mit Betonung: “denn er wird heilen” כִּי הוּא יִרְפֶּא. Damit aber wird jede Konsultation des Arztes diesem Grundsatz unterstellt, der wiederum gedanklich von Ex 15,26 geleitet ist. Interessant ist nun vor allem, wie die Heranziehung des Arztes hier nochmals begründet wird. Wiederum greift Sirach in V. 12b das wichtige Stichwort צורך “Bedarf”/ “Notwendigkeit” auf, dem wir bereits in V. 1a begegnet sind. Nun ist der Zeitpunkt gekommen, an dem sich gegenüber V. 1 die Notwendigkeit des Arztes erweist,

⁴⁰ So mit Recht LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 63. Er weist darauf hin, dass der Salbenmischer der Anfertigung von Luxusartikeln diene. So begegnet er in Ex 30,22-28; 37,29 und Koh 10,1, wo er Salböl und Räucherwerk bereitet.

⁴¹ LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 64.

⁴² Vgl. z.B. Ps 32,1-5.

der wie alle Schöpfungswerke sonst entsprechend Sir 39,21 seinen besonderen Zweck hat. V. 13 greift dabei ein weiteres Stichwort aus Sir 39,16 auf, und zwar das des rechten Zeitpunktes: עַתָּה. So vertritt Sirach in Sir 39,16 die Auffassung, dass jedes Werk Gottes zu "seiner Zeit" für jeden Bedarf genügt, ein Gedanke, den Sir 39,21 in der Form ergänzt, dass alles zu "seiner Zeit" seinen Wert bzw. Überfluss hat⁴³. Verschiedene Aspekte sind dabei zu berücksichtigen. Mit Koh 3,1 geht Sirach davon aus, dass es für alles einen von Gott festgelegten Zeitpunkt gibt. Während sich dieser nach Kohelet menschlichem Erkennen entzieht, ist hier Sirach optimistischer. Durchaus ist es dem Menschen möglich eine Ordnung in der Schöpfung zu entdecken und dabei in bestimmten Situationen den rechten Zeitpunkt zu erkennen. Deutlich wird dies etwa in Sir 32,11, wo es darum geht, ein Weingelage zur rechten Zeit zu verlassen: בַּעַת מִפְּקֹד אֵל הַתְּאָחֵר. Mit Kohelet erkennt Sirach aber auch an, dass es letztlich Gott ist, der über den rechten Zeitpunkt verfügt. Dies gilt vor allem im vorliegenden Fall. Insofern Gott zur rechten Zeit das Tun des Arztes gelingen lässt (vgl. V. 14), lässt Sirach gleichzeitig die Möglichkeit offen, dass das Handeln des Arztes nicht zum Erfolg führt, weil Gott eben nicht den rechten Zeitpunkt für den Erfolg gewährt. So bleibt Gott der letztlich alles Verfügende und damit wiederum der eigentlich Heilende. Dies verbindet sich mit einem Aspekt, auf den bereits Lührmann aufmerksam gemacht hat⁴⁴. So spielt der "rechte Zeitpunkt" auch in der hippokratischen Medizin eine wichtige Rolle. Hier liegt es insbesondere in der Kompetenz des Arztes den richtigen Zeitpunkt zu nutzen⁴⁵. Bei Sirach wird dieser nun nicht mehr – und dies ist ein deutlicher Unterschied – in erster Linie der Erkenntnisfähigkeit des Arztes zugewiesen, wiewohl auch diese eine Rolle spielen kann⁴⁶, sondern als Gabe Gottes verstanden, der dies in seiner

⁴³ Zur Interpretation dieses Aspektes in Sir 39,16.21 vgl. WICKE-REUTER, *Providenz*, 71.72.79.80.

⁴⁴ LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 70.

⁴⁵ Vgl. ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, 34: "So galten der 4.,7.,11.,14.,17.,20.,34.,40. und der 60. Tag einer Krankheit im hippokratischen *Prognosticon* als kritisch" und damit entscheidend für den weiteren Krankheitsverlauf.

⁴⁶ LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 70, meint, dass der Vers durchaus auch in dem Sinn verstanden werden kann, "daß es zu den Aufgaben des Arztes auch gehört, diesen ihm gewährten richtigen Zeitpunkt zu erkennen und zu nutzen". Dies

Schöpfungsordnung so festgelegt hat: “es gibt eine Zeit” עַתָּה. Insofern ist auch hier wiederum - diesmal in hippokratischer Terminologie - Gott, der den rechten Zeitpunkt gibt, eigentlich Heilender, was ja im Anschluss auch der Relativsatz V. 14a nochmals betont, wo Gott nun ausdrücklich Subjekt des Gelingens ist.

V. 13b schließlich fügt eine letzte Begründung an, den Arzt aufzusuchen: Auch der Arzt betet zu Gott. Der Arzt tritt also in eine Gebetsgemeinschaft mit dem bereits in V. 9 zum Beten aufgeforderten Patienten ein, ist sich also der Abhängigkeit seines Tuns von Gottes Wirken bewusst. Auch dahinter steckt, wie Lührmann deutlich gemacht hat, ein Motiv, das sich im Umfeld der hippokratischen Medizin findet. Diese sah sich — ähnlich wie das Ärzteswesen seitens des traditionellen Jhwh-Glaubens — religiöser Vorbehalte ausgesetzt, insbesondere aufgrund seiner Überzeugung, jede Krankheit habe ihre natürliche Ursache⁴⁷, denn diese widerspreche einer echten Frömmigkeit, die mit der Macht der Götter rechne. Mit einem ähnlichen Problem scheint sich auch V. 13b auseinanderzusetzen, wenn Sirach hier die Frömmigkeit des Arztes ausdrücklich herauszustellen sucht. Wiederum geschieht dies dadurch, dass der Arzt in Parallele zum geistbegabten Schriftgelehrten in Sir 39,6 tritt, dessen Handeln ebenfalls ins Gebet mündet. Hinzu kommt jedoch ein Weiteres. Auffällig ist nämlich, dass Sirach im Unterschied zum Gebet des Patienten in V. 9 für “beten” die recht seltene Kausativform der hebräischen Wurzel עָתַר verwendet. Diese findet sich — bis auf eine Ausnahme — im hebräischen Alten Testament ausschließlich im Zusammenhang des fürbittenden Gebets des Mose für den Pharao, das diesen von den über ihn hereingebrochenen Plagen befreien soll, vgl. Ex 8,4.5.24.25; 9,28

dürfte allerdings von der Aussageabfolge her nicht die primäre Intention sein. Vielmehr geht es auch bei diesem Motiv darum, gegenüber einer sehr säkularen Sicht der hippokratischen Medizin die Heilung weniger dem Erkenntnisvermögen des Arztes zuzuschreiben als der Verfügungsgewalt Gottes, der den rechten Zeitpunkt der Heilung gibt, um auf diese Weise auch mit Gewissensbissen belasteten Juden den Zugang zum Arzt zu ermöglichen.

⁴⁷ LÜHRMANN, *Arzt*, 73, verweist in diesem Zusammenhang auf die Schrift “Über die Heilige Krankheit”. Dort wird gegen den Vorwurf, der Arzt widerspreche mit seiner Annahme, jede Krankheit habe eine natürliche Ursache, der Macht der Götter, ausgeführt, dass der wirkliche Arzt mit seinem Respekt vor der Ordnung der Natur frömmere sei als all diejenigen, die der Krankheit z.B. mit Beschwörungsformeln beizukommen suchten.

und 10,17. Auch im Grundstamm mit derselben Bedeutung “beten”/ “bitten” finden sich zwei der fünf Belege der Wurzel im Kontext der Fürbitte Mose für den Pharao, nämlich in Ex 8,26 und 10,18. Hinzu kommt, dass diese Wurzel nur noch einmal im Sirachbuch verwendet wird, nämlich in Sir 37,15, wo es um den Beistand Gottes geht, in schwierigen Fragen den rechten Weg zu finden. Stellt man nun in Rechnung, dass der Arzt bereits in V. 5 mit dem Handeln des Mose parallelisiert wird, so scheint dieses Anliegen auch für die Verwendung dieser Wurzel in V. 13 leitend gewesen zu sein. Nicht nur handelt der Arzt wie Mose als Heilsmitte Gottes, er hält auch wie Mose Fürbitte für seinen Patienten. Der Arzt ist damit tatsächlich in gewisser Hinsicht dem Mose ähnlich: das Höchste, was ein jüdischer Autor über einen Berufsstand wohl sagen konnte.

Eine heikle Frage ist nun, welcher Arzt hier gemeint ist: ein jüdischer oder ein nicht-jüdischer Arzt? Aufgrund der Bemerkung über den betenden Arzt hält man – sofern dieses Problem überhaupt thematisiert wird – in der Forschung eher erstere Annahme für wahrscheinlich⁴⁸. Andererseits wird eine solche angesichts der Existenz hellenistischer Wanderärzte sicher naheliegende Unterscheidung hier gerade nicht getroffen. Zudem zeigt sich Sirach in seinem gesamten Buch als souveräner Monotheist, für den es selbstverständlich ist, dass der Gott Israels die Weisheit über seine Schöpfung ausgegossen hat und sich dabei nicht auf Israel beschränkte, wiewohl in Israel die Weisheit in Gestalt der Tora Wohnung genommen hat. So vermisst man bei Sirach auch jegliche Auseinandersetzung mit hellenistischem Götterkult, lediglich an einer Stelle, in Sir 34,1-8, lehnt er in kühler Rationalität jegliche Form von Traumdeutung und Divination ab, wie sie im hellenistischen Bereich praktiziert wurden. Ist es möglich, dass Sirach ein letztlich an Asklepios gerichtetes Gebet eines hellenistischen Arztes als an den einen Gott, nämlich den Gott Israels gerichtet sehen konnte? Immerhin wird hier ja recht unspezifisch nicht von einem Gebet des Arztes an Jhwh, sondern lediglich an “Gott” 𐤁𐤏 gesprochen. Hinzu kommt die Beobachtung, dass die von Sirach in der Schlusszene seines Buches beschriebene Tempelliturgie des Simeon II. im Niederfallen “allen Fleisches” in Sir 50,17 endet. So heißt es dort: “Alles Fleisch beeilte sich zusammen und fiel auf sein Angesicht

⁴⁸ So etwa HOGAN, *Healing*, 48.

zur Erde nieder, um vor dem Höchsten anzubeten, dem Heiligen Israels". "Die kultische Versammlung um den Hohenpriester", so schreibt Marböck, ist hier "Repräsentantin der Menschheit, ja vielleicht sogar der ganzen Schöpfung"⁴⁹. Dabei greift Sirach interessanterweise auf Jes 66,23 zurück, wo am Ende der Zeiten die gesamte verbliebene Menschheit zur Jhwh-Verehrung findet. Da es sich hier nun jedoch nicht wie in der Bezugsstelle um eine Beschreibung der Endzeit handelt, soll damit offenbar zum Ausdruck kommen, dass nicht nur die Tempelliturgie höchster Ausdruck des Gebetes der Menschheit ist, sondern alle Gebete der Menschheit letztlich hingeordnet sind auf den Gott Israels. Vor diesem Hintergrund wäre es kein großes Problem, auch das Gebet des Arztes, mag er auch ein nichtjüdischer Arzt sein, diesem Gebet zuzuordnen, womit sich in der Theologie Sirachs ein erstaunlicher Universalismus offenbaren würde, der, wie gezeigt, seine Grundlage in seinem beschriebenen, von stoischem Gedankengut beeinflussten Weltordnungsdenken findet.

So gelingt es Sirach unter Rückgriff auf die eigene Tradition das heilende Handeln und fürbittende Gebet des Arztes in Analogie zum Handeln der großen Gestalt des Mose zu setzen. Zugleich ordnet er ihn vor dem Hintergrund seines von stoischer Philosophie geprägten Weltordnungsdenkens in die von Gott zum Wohl des Menschen gestaltete Schöpfungsordnung ein. Da es nur einen Gott gibt, kann dabei sogar das Gebet eines möglicherweise heidnischen Arztes letztlich nur dem einen Gott, nämlich dem Gott Israels gelten.

Welch eine souveräne Theologie wird hier in einer konkreten Frage des alltäglichen Lebens entfaltet.

Burkard ZAPFF

⁴⁹ MARBÖCK, *Simon*, 222.

SUMMARY

Si 38,1-15 illustrates how Sirach understands the initially disputed institution of the Hellenistic physician. Against the background of traditional Old Testament beliefs and some Stoic concepts of world order, medicine is seen as part of God's work of salvation. Rejecting it would even amount to a sin. The Hebrew text of Sirach is astonishingly universalistic. There, the physician's work is similar to that of Moses, and the physician's prayer, either Hebrew or Hellenistic, is addressed to the one God. By contrast, the Greek text is more traditional, and presents a more negative view of the physician.

John 5,31-47 and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics. A Comparative Approach

The Fourth Gospel is notably different from its synoptic counterparts. Years ago, Stephen Neill and Tom Wright remarked that John has been charged with “excessive individualism and introspective exclusivism”¹. Accordingly, the Fourth Gospel has received little attention as a valuable contribution among scholars undertaking a quest for the historical Jesus².

I. Johannine-Synoptic Relations and Jesus’ Discourses in the Fourth Gospel

When it comes, more specifically, to the historical reliability of the Johannine speech material, the relationship between the Johannine and Synoptic Gospels is particularly significant. Indeed, a strong correlation is often found between how a particular scholar evaluates the perceived relationship of the Johannine discourses and the teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics and his or her opinion with regard to the authenticity of the words of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. Especially those scholars with a certain skepticism towards Johannine authen-

¹ S. NEILL – T. WRIGHT, *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1986* (Oxford ²1988) 436.

² Cf., e.g., E.P. SANDERS, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London 1993) 71, saying that scholars “have almost unanimously, I think entirely correctly, concluded that the teaching of the historical Jesus is to be sought in the synoptic gospels and that John represents an advanced development (...)”. Also J.D.G. DUNN, *Jesus Remembered* (Christianity in the Making 1; Grand Rapids, MI 2003) 165: “Few scholars would regard John as a source for information regarding Jesus’ life and ministry in any degree comparable to the Synoptics”. Yet, cf. now the more positive views on Johannine historicity visible in two publications of the SBL John, Jesus, and History study group: *John, Jesus, and History, Volume 1. Critical Appraisals of Critical Views* (eds. P.N. ANDERSON – F. JUST – T. THATCHER) (SBL Symposium Series 44; Leiden 2007) and *John, Jesus, and History, Volume 2. Aspects of Historicity in the Fourth Gospel* (eds. P.N. ANDERSON – F. JUST – T. THATCHER) (Early Christianity and Its Literature 2; Leiden 2009).

ticity are prone to employ arguments based on vast differences between John and the Synoptics in order to substantiate their view³.

Generally speaking, no major contribution to the debate about the authenticity of the Johannine discourses that does not appeal — at least to a certain extent — to a comparison between the Fourth Gospel and its synoptic counterparts appears to exist. Yet, a thorough comparison between the portrait of Jesus' words in John and in the Synoptics in light of the larger question of the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel has been a desideratum of Johannine scholarship. In other words, while critics of Johannine authenticity have repeatedly reverted to arguments emphasizing the supposedly vast differences between the Johannine discourses and the synoptic teaching of Jesus, surprisingly, no sustainable attempt has been put forward to prove or disprove this particular claim on the basis of an extensive review of the data. Already in his 1967 essay entitled "The Portrait of Jesus in John and in the Synoptics", C.H. Dodd called for a broad analysis of the Fourth Gospel⁴ that anticipated the comparative approach we are about to summarize in this article — an approach that has been developed and applied more fully elsewhere⁵. Already in Dodd's earlier influential works, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* and *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, he appears convinced that the answer to the question of whether the Johannine Jesus was a credible historical figure could only be answered by scrutinizing the Fourth Gospel in comparison with its synoptic counterparts: "[I do not] at present see any way of identifying further traditional material

³ Among those pronouncedly skeptical regarding the authenticity of the Johannine discourses cf., e.g., the Jesus Seminar in *The Five Gospels. The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (eds. R.W. FUNK – R.W. HOOVER) (New York, NY 1996) 2-34, esp. 9-13; M. CASEY, *Is John's Gospel True?* (London 1996) e.g. 30-62, 80-81. One of the moderately skeptical scholars using this argument is J.D.G. DUNN, *The Evidence for Jesus* (Louisville, KY 1985) 31-32; also ID., *Jesus Remembered*, 166-167.

⁴ C.H. DODD, "The Portrait of Jesus in John and in the Synoptics", *Christian History and Interpretation. Studies Presented to John Knox* (eds. W.R. FARMER et al.) (Cambridge 1967) 183-198.

⁵ Cf. Ph.F. BARTHOLOMÄ, *The Johannine Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics. A Comparative Approach to the Authenticity of Jesus' Words in the Fourth Gospel* (Ph.D. Diss., Evangelische Theologische Faculteit, Leuven 2010). For an extensive review of the literature regarding the authenticity of the Johannine discourses, showing the significance of Johannine-Synoptic relations for the authenticity debate, cf. *ibid.*, 9-46.

in the Fourth Gospel, where comparison with the other Gospels fails us, without giving undue weight to subjective impressions”⁶.

In the above noted essay, Dodd set forth a modified approach for comparing Johannine and synoptic teaching material. Two features of this approach are especially noteworthy. First, Dodd consciously moved away from comparing mainly individual sayings or limited verse clusters in favor of using a larger part of a Johannine discourse (John 5,19-30) for a test case. Second, aware that to focus only on semantic reminiscences would unnecessarily limit the scope of his study, Dodd chose a more comprehensive approach in order to examine whether there was conceptual overlap (i.e., similarity in content) between what Jesus says in John and the portrait found in the Synoptics. In doing so, he observed that the concept of Jesus as both the life-giver and the judge (prominent features in John 5), is — though with different degrees of abstraction — also present in Matt 13,41-43, Matt 12,39-42 par., Mark 10,17-27, and several other passages. The theme of Christ’s authority to judge (John 5,22.27) is also represented in Mark 2,10 par. and, more implicitly, in Mark 11,27-33, or Matt 8,5-13 par.

Ultimately, Dodd concluded that “we have before us [in John 5,19-30], in theological guise, a picture of the personality and work of Jesus which corresponds, in point after point, with the picture offered by the Synoptics in a very different idiom”⁷. Dodd acknowledged that these conclusions remain provisional “until they are tested through the application of a similar process of analysis to other passages”⁸. To our knowledge, no study has been done on so broad a scale. Thus, the purpose of this article is to respond to Dodd’s appeal by briefly introducing a more nuanced methodology for assessing the general relationship between John and the Synoptics. This method will then be applied in exemplary fashion to the remainder of Jesus’ discourse in John 5 in order to evaluate the degree of differences and similarities between the teaching of Jesus in John and in the Synoptics. The essential question we thereby seek to answer is whether a negative judgment concerning the authenticity of Jesus’ words in John 5,31-47 can be legitimately based upon the differences between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. It needs to be noted

⁶ C.H. DODD, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge 1953) 431.

⁷ DODD, “The Portrait of Jesus”, 194.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 195.

that the argument developed here remains unaffected by any given theory of literary relationship between John and the Synoptics and therefore does not necessarily presuppose the now increasingly common assumption of John being to some degree literarily dependent on its synoptic counterparts⁹.

II. A Comparative Approach: Methodology Defined

The Fourth Gospel claims a historical intent (John 19,35; 21,24). Thus, the authenticity of the Johannine discourses should be evaluated in light of the standards that existed in ancient historiography¹⁰. An investigation of the authenticity of direct speech in Greco-Roman and Hebrew historiography shows that when presenting direct speech, both Greco-Roman as well as ancient Jewish historians made a clear distinction between form and content. From their perspective, changing the wording of any given statement was legitimate as long as the content was faithfully preserved¹¹. Therefore, according to con-

⁹ The literary dependence of John on the Synoptics has been strongly argued for by the so-called "Leuven school" especially represented by F. NEIRYNCK; cf., e.g., F. NEIRYNCK, "John and the Synoptics 1975-1990", *John and the Synoptics* (ed. A. DENAUX) (BETL 101; Leuven 1991) 3-62, as well as ID., "John and the Synoptics", *L'Évangile de Jean* (ed. M. DE JONGE) (BETL 44; Leuven 1977) 73-106. For an overview of the recent discussion with extensive bibliography, see now S. SCHREIBER, "Kannte Johannes die Synoptiker? Zur aktuellen Diskussion", *VF* 51 (2006) 7-24.

¹⁰ One of the very few Johannine commentators to take appropriate account of ancient historiographical practice in dealing with the historical substance of the Fourth Gospel is C.S. KEENER, *The Gospel of John. A Commentary* (Peabody, MA 2003) I, 1-80.

¹¹ As the ancient historian's potential to give a literal report of what had been spoken was rather limited, the representation of the original speech would have included selection, abbreviation, omission, interpretation, as well as paraphrase "and almost necessarily a degree of recasting in the historian's own style" – R. BAUCKHAM, "Historiographical Characteristics of the Gospel of John", *NTS* 53 (2007) 30. Cf. also KEENER, *John*, I, 75: "A modern demand for verbatim accuracy in ancient speech reports would be historically naïve; ancient readers never expected it". For a discussion of the methodological considerations of Thucydides and Polybius, see BARTHOLOMÄ, *The Johannine Discourses*, 48-53. On speeches in Hebrew historiography, see *ibid.*, 53-56, as well as A.D. BAUM, "Zu Funktion und Authentizitätsanspruch der oratio recta: Hebräische und griechische Geschichtsschreibung im Vergleich", *ZNW* 115 (2003) 586-607, esp. 599-605.

temporary standards, the Johannine discourses should be considered as historically authentic provided that they reliably reproduce the basic substance of the words of Jesus. Because differences in wording are not sufficient to argue reasonably for the inauthenticity of the Johannine discourses, our comparative approach to Johannine-Synoptic relations must not only function on a semantic level but also include a rigorous comparison of the conceptual content of Jesus' teaching as found in John and the Synoptics.

We, therefore, suggest a bifocal method for examining the Gospels' evidence that is able to distinguish between the two parameters of similarity in wording (a) and similarity in content (b). Both parameters measure three levels of closeness:

(a) When it comes to the parameter of wording, level 0 indicates little or no verbal agreement. This category includes sayings or propositions that show no or at least no significant overlap in wording. Level 1 identifies some verbal agreement. This level requires the conformity of one or more individual words or phrases. These shared words, however, should have at least some significance in conveying the basic assertion of a given saying. Level 2 designates close verbal agreement. This type of closeness assumes a very high degree of conformity in wording, i.e., almost complete verbal correspondence.

(b) By analogy, within the parameter of content, level 0 means no similarity in content, i.e., no discernible correlation in content between Johannine speech material and Jesus' words in the Synoptics. Level 1 indicates some similarity in content. This means that the conceptual thrust of a particular Johannine saying or teaching is similar to a synoptic proposition at least to some degree. Level 2 identifies propositions that bear a close resemblance in terms of content.

This method of classification enables us to assign to any given Johannine proposition a level of similarity in wording as well as content as compared with particular dominical sayings in the Synoptic Gospels. For example, in a Johannine-Synoptic relation designated as [0/2], the numbers in brackets indicate that the given propositions contain no verbal agreement (level [0/] similarity of wording) but have a close conceptual similarity (level [2] similarity of content).

With regard to the results of this comparative approach as related to the question of Johannine authenticity in general, the following needs to be noted. If, on the one hand, a significant amount of Jesus'

words as represented in the Fourth Gospel can be shown to be similar in either wording or content to the Synoptics (i.e., featuring a level 1 or level 2 type of closeness), then it would be difficult to uphold a negative judgment concerning the authenticity of any given discourse based upon the differences between John and the Synoptics. On the other hand, if large portions of the Johannine discourses were to show very little agreement with the reported teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics not only in wording but also in basic content (i.e., featuring a level 0 or, at best, level 1 type of closeness), then the Fourth Gospel's representation of Jesus' words could be considered as essentially different from the Synoptics — something that could potentially serve as an argument against the authenticity of John.

III. Three Witnesses: John 5,31-47
and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics

In the main section of this article, we will apply this comparative method to the second part of Jesus' discourse in John 5,31-47. The Johannine propositions appear in the left column, synoptic parallels are given in the right column. Overlap in wording is given in brackets, overlap in content is made visible through underlining in the tables below. For the sake of brevity the Greek wording is quoted only in those instances where semantic overlap actually occurs.

1. *The Significance and Availability of True Testimony (John 5,31-32)*

[5,31] <u>If I testify</u> [μαρτυρῶ] <u>about myself,</u> <u>my testimony</u> [ἡ μαρτυρία] <u>is not true.</u>	[1/1]	[Matt 18,16] But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that <u>every word</u> <u>may be confirmed by the evi-</u> <u>dence of two or three witnesses</u> [δύο μαρτύρων ἢ τριῶν].
[5,32] <u>There is another who</u> <u>testifies on my behalf, and</u> <u>I know that his testimony</u> <u>to me is true.</u>	[0/1]	[Matt 12,28 par.] <u>But if it is by the Spirit of</u> <u>God that I cast out demons,</u> <u>then the kingdom of God has</u> <u>come to you.</u>

In John 5,31, Jesus supposes that a self-testimony would not be sufficient to prove his claims: “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true” (cf. John 8,13). This supposition is based on the demand of the Mosaic law for additional witnesses (Deut 17,16; 19,15), a demand also embraced by the Synoptic Jesus in Matt 18,16: “every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses” [1/1-level of closeness; cf. the common usage of the μαρτυρῶ/μαρτυρία-word group].

John 5,32 then explicates that “there is another who testifies on my behalf”, most likely a reference to the Father¹². While the Synoptic Gospels do not directly refer to God, the Father, as testifying truthfully on behalf of the Son, this same idea seems to be at least implicit in Matt 12,28 par. [0/1-level of closeness], where Jesus refutes the allegation that he drives out demons by Beelzebul. He assumes that his works demonstrate divine power and thus serve as the truthful, yet indirect testimony of the Father about the validity of his Son’s own claims. The concept that the Father stands behind Jesus and his ministry is also inherent in two further synoptic statements [with possible 0/1-levels of closeness]. In Matt 10,40 and Luke 10,16 Jesus insinuates that the crux of the matter is the response to the one who sent him. This implies at the very least that, in the end, the true testimony of the sending Father must not be neglected.

2. *The Witness of John the Baptist (John 5,33-35)*

[5,33a]

You sent messengers to John,

[0/0]

[5,33b]

and he testified to the truth.

[0/1]

[Matt 11,9 par.]

What then did you go out to see?
A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and
more than a prophet.

¹² E.g., R.E. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)* (AB 29A; Garden City, NY 1966) 224; D.A. CARSON, *The Gospel According to John* (PNTC; Leicester 1990) 260.

“testified to the truth” is implicit in Jesus’ synoptic characterization of the Baptist as “more than a prophet” (Matt 11,9 par.; cf. also on 5,35 below; [0/1-level of closeness]), while the narrative comments in Luke 3,15-18 par. point in the same direction.

Jesus goes on to say in John 5,34 that he himself does not depend on human testimony (cf. our comments on 5,41), rather “I say these things so that you may be saved”. The purpose of pointing to the Baptist is not to provide necessary confirmation but “to direct the attention of his hearers to that which might put them out on the path that leads to salvation”¹³. That salvation is the ultimate goal of his mission is likewise clearly pronounced in Jesus’ summary statement in Luke 19,10 par.: “For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save [σῶζω] the lost” [1/2-level of closeness]¹⁴.

Regarding the witness of John the Baptist, in John 5,35 Jesus calls him “a burning and shining lamp”. His additional statement that “you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light” reflects the Jewish people’s respect for John and at least a temporary disposition to receive his message. In Matt 11,7-9 par., Jesus supposes that the crowds actually aspired to spend time in the Baptist’s light: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? (...) What then did you go out to see?” In the same context, John is clearly presented as a “shining lamp”, i.e., a prominent godly messenger, as Jesus states in Matt 11,11 par. that “among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist” [0/2-level of closeness]¹⁵. The fact that the Baptist was held in high regard as a prophet is likewise used by the Synoptic Jesus in his dispute with the Jewish leadership in Mark 11,30-33 par. [0/1-level of closeness; cf. the narrative remarks in Matt 3,5-6]¹⁶.

¹³ L. MORRIS, *The Gospel According to John* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1995) 289.

¹⁴ For this parallel cf. also C. BLOMBERG, *The Historical Reliability of John’s Gospel. Issues & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL 2001) 116.

¹⁵ Matt 11,7-11 is referenced as a parallel by ²⁷NA, CARSON, *John*, 260; H. RIDDERBOS, *The Gospel of John. A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI 1997) 203; also BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 116 (Matt 11,11-12).

¹⁶ That Mark 11,30-33 likewise expresses that the Jews were being attracted to John has been noted by BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 116; BROWN, *John* (i-xii), 227; R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HTKNT 4; Freiburg 1971) II, 173, and (for the Matthean parallel) RIDDERBOS, *John*, 203; pace J. R. MICHAELS, *The Gospel of John* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2010) 327, who argues, rather undifferentiated, that Jesus’ picture of the Jewish authorities’ reception of John here in the Fourth Gospel is quite different from what we find in the Synoptics.

3. *The Witness of the Father (John 5,36-44)*

<p>[5,36ab] But I have a testimony greater than John's. <u>The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf</u></p>	[0/1]	<p>[Matt 11,4-5 par.] <u>Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.</u></p>
	[0/1]	<p>[Matt 12,28 par.] <u>But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.</u></p>
	[0/1]	<p>[Matt 9,6a par.] <u>But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins</u></p>
		<p>Cf. also [Matt 11,20-24 par.], as well as the narrative comments in [Matt 8,27 par.; Luke 5,21].</p>
<p>[5,36c.37a] <u>that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me</u></p>	[0/2]	<p>[Matt 10,40] (...) whoever receives me receives <u>the one who sent me</u>.</p>
	[0/2]	<p>[Luke 10,16] (...) the one who rejects me rejects <u>the one who sent me</u>.</p>
<p>[5,37b] <u>has himself testified on my behalf.</u></p>	[0/1]	<p>[Matt 11,27a par.] <u>All things have been handed over to me by my Father; (...)</u></p>

[5,37c]

You have never heard[ἀκηκόατε] his voice or seen[ἑώρακάτε] his form,

[1/1]

[Matt 13,13-15 par.]

The reason I speak to them in parables is that 'seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen [ἀκούοντες οὐκ ἀκούουσιν], nor do they understand.' (...) you will look closely yet will never comprehend [ἴδητε]. For this heart of this people has become dull; (...) and they have shut their eyes, so that they would not see [ἴδωσιν] with their eyes and hear [ἀκούσωσιν] with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn (...)

[Matt 11,27c par.]

(...) and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

[0/1]

[5,38a]

and you do not have [οὐκ ἔχετε] his word [τὸν λόγον] abiding in you,

[1/2]

[Mark 4,16-17 par.]

And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word [τὸν λόγον], they immediately receive it with joy. But they have no [οὐκ ἔχουσιν] root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word [τὸν λόγον], immediately they fall away.

[5,38b]

because you do not believe [οὐ πιστεύετε] him whom he has sent.

[1/1]

[Matt 17,17 par.]

You faithless [ἄπιστος] and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you?

On the theme of the Father sending the Son, see [Matt 10,40; Luke 10,16].

[5,39]

You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf.

[0/2]

[Luke 24,44]

These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you— that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.

[0/2]

[Luke 18,31]

See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.

[5,40]

Yet you refuse [οὐ θέλετε] to come [ἐλθεῖν] to me to have life.

[1/2]

[Matt 23,37 par.]

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing [οὐκ ἠθελήσατε]!

[1/2]

[Luke 15,28]

Then he became angry and refused to go in [οὐκ ᾔθελεν εἰσελθεῖν].

See also the parable of the great banquet in [Matt 22,2-14 par.].

Cf. also [Matt 7,14; 11,28; 19,29 par.].

[5,41]

I do not accept glory from human beings

[0/1]

[Luke 4,24 par.]

Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown.

<p>[5,42] <u>But I know that you do not have the love of God</u> [τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ] <u>in you.</u></p>	[1/2]	<p>[Luke 11,42] But woe to you Pharisees! <u>For you</u> tithe mint and rue and herbs of all kinds, and <u>neglect justice and the love of God</u> [τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ]; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others.</p>
<p>[5,43a] <u>I have come in my Father's name</u> [ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς μου],</p>	[1/1]	<p>[Matt 11,27a par.] <u>All things have been handed over to me by my Father</u> [τοῦ πατρὸς μου] (...)</p>
<p>[5,43b] <u>and you do not accept me;</u></p>	[1/1]	<p>[Matt 23,39 par.] For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, '<u>Blessed is the one who comes in the name</u> [ἐν ὀνόματι] <u>of the Lord.</u>'" See also the "I have come"-sayings in [Luke 12,49; Luke 12,51 par.; Matt 5,17; Matt 10,35; Mark 2,17] et al.</p>
<p>[5,43b] <u>and you do not accept me;</u></p>	[0/1]	<p>[Matt 17,17 par.] <u>You unbelieving and perverse generation!</u> For the motif of "rejecting or disowning Jesus" cf. [Matt 10,33 par.; Luke 10,16], both possible 1/1-levels of closeness.</p>
<p>[5,43c] <u>if another comes in his own name</u> [τῷ ὀνόματι], <u>you will accept him.</u></p>	[1/2]	<p>[Matt 24,5.24 par.] <u>For many will come in my name</u> [τῷ ὀνόματι], <u>saying, 'I am the Messiah!'</u> <u>and they will lead many astray.</u> (...) <u>For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce great signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.</u></p>

[5,44]

How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God?

[0/2]

[Matt 23,5-7]

They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with respect in the market-places, and to have people call them rabbi.

[Matt 6,1-2.5.16]

Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. (...) And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. (...) And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.

[0/2]

The second witness mentioned in John 5,31-47 is the witness of the Father. According to John 5,36ab, this testimony is indeed "greater than John's" and is represented by the works that the Father has authorized Jesus to do. Jesus presents these works as ev-

idence for his claims when he states that “the very works that I am doing testify on my behalf”. That these works (including but not limited to the miraculous) serve as witnesses to himself is certainly the idea behind Jesus’ answer to John the Baptist in Matt 11,4-5 par. Luke 7,22. Here he points out that his own deeds ought to prove his divine identity [0/1-level of closeness]¹⁷. As with John 5,32 we may again point to Matt 12,28 as a conceptual parallel in the synoptic tradition with Jesus referring to his exorcisms done in divine power as meaningful witnesses to his own person [0/1-level of closeness]. A similar appeal to Jesus’ miracle working as testimony to his authority can be found in Matt 9,6a par., where the healing of a lame man is preceded by the statement, “But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” [0/1-level of closeness; cf. also Matt 11,20-24 par., as well as Matt 8,27 par.; Luke 5,21]¹⁸.

John 5,36c.37a and 37b take the theme of the Father’s witness one step further. Not only does the Father testify indirectly through the works of Jesus but “the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf”. Jesus’ self-conception as God’s envoy, the one sent by the Father, is clearly a common motif within the three Synoptic Gospels (Matt 10,40 par.; Luke 10,16 [0/2-level of closeness]; cf. also Matt 15,24; Luke 4,43; as well as the parable of the wicked tenants in Matt 21,37 par.). The exact referent of the divine testimony in 5,37b is difficult to determine. It probably comprises more than the voice at Jesus’ baptism (cf. Matt 3,17 par.; 17,5 par.) or the witness of Scripture. Taking it in a broader sense as a “general reference to all of the Father’s revealing [and thus authorizing] work”¹⁹, we detect at least some conceptual overlap with the most “Johannine” of synoptic statements in Matt 11,27 par. Here the divine testimony manifests itself in that “all things have been handed over to me by my Father” [0/1-level of closeness].

Despite the Father’s witness, people “do not believe him whom he has sent”. Charging the crowd in this way with unbelief as found here in John 5,38b is, of course, not exclusively Johannine. The contrast between receiving divine testimony and not believing (ex-

¹⁷ BROWN, *John* I, 227; cf. for this parallel also the ²⁷NA margin.

¹⁸ Matt 12,28 and Matt 9,6a par. are also listed as synoptic parallels to John 5,36 in ²⁷NA.

¹⁹ CARSON, *John*, 262.

pressed by a negated form of πιστεύω/πίστος) is present in the Synoptics as well. For example, in Matt 17,17 par. (cf. also Luke 22,67), we find some similarity in both content and wording [1/1-level of closeness]: “O unbelieving [ἄπιστος] and perverse generation (...)”. At first, Matt 21,32 par. seems to be an even closer conceptual parallel. Yet here the unbelief is centered on John the Baptist.

John 5,37c and 38a specify the ignorance of Jesus’ hearers: “You have never heard his voice or seen his form, and you do not have his word abiding in you”. This is to say that the Jews are unable to hear God’s voice in Jesus so that they might see God, the Father, in him and have God’s word point them to his truth. These signs of ignorance toward the divine revelation in the Son are also part of Jesus’ teaching in the Synoptics. In more general terms, the motif of “seeing” (although not always expressed by a form of ὁράω) and “hearing” (ἀκούω) followed by a negative reaction is quite common in the first three Gospels (cf. especially Matt 13,14-15 par. [1/1-level of closeness], also Matt 8,43; [11,9; 12,38-40]; Mark 5,16-17; Luke 12,54-56): “seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand”. The reason for such ignorance is likewise summarized in Matt 11,27c par.: “no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him”. That God’s word does not continually dwell and remain in them is conceptually close to Jesus’ illustration in the parable of the sower in Mark 4,15-16 par. [1/2-level of closeness; semantic overlap with the noun τὸν λόγον and a form of ἔχω]²⁰.

The Jewish commitment to diligent study of the Scriptures is assumed both in John and the Synoptics. Yet, Jesus argues in John 5,39 that mere engagement with God’s word does not necessarily lead to eternal life. At the core, what is needed is the awareness that the Scriptures actually point to Jesus as the goal of redemptive history: “it is they that testify on my behalf”. This theme will be taken up later in the discourse. Suffice it to say here that the Synoptic Jesus is likewise quite outspoken about the importance of understanding that the Scriptures are oriented toward him. As similarities, R. Brown suggested Jesus’ teaching in the temple in Mark 12,35-37 par.²¹, while C. Blomberg pointed to the fulfillment-

²⁰ BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 117.

²¹ BROWN, *John (i-xii)*, 228.

word in Matt 5,17 as a parallel to John 5,39²². Yet, even closer parallels are observable in Luke 24,44 (“everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled”)²³ and also in Luke 18,31 (“everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets”)²⁴.

While the Jewish crowd was willing to listen to John the Baptist for a while (5,35), Jesus declares in John 5,40 that they are not willing to come to him and accept him: “you refuse to come to me to have life”. The motif of the unwillingness of the Jews to come to Jesus is present in the Synoptics as well, as Jesus laments concerning Jerusalem in Matt 23,37 par.: “How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing” [1/2-level of closeness; cf. negated form of $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega$]. “There is [here in Matthew] the same thought of a tender eagerness to save, met by a stubborn refusal to be saved”²⁵. In two synoptic parables, Jesus addresses the exact same issue. In the so-called parable of the prodigal son, the elder brother is unwilling to participate in the feast of the Father (Luke 15,28): “Then he became angry and refused to go in” [1/2-level of closeness]. The same deliberate refusal is visible in the parable of the great banquet in Matt 22,2-14 par., where those invited “would not come” to the wedding banquet. If we take into account that the Johannine Jesus actually implies that coming to him results in the receiving of “life”, several additional synoptic parallels apply. In Matt 11,28 the Synoptic Jesus says “Come to me (...) and I will give you rest” [note the common usage of the phrase $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma \mu\epsilon$], while the idea that the enjoyment of (eternal) life [$\zeta\omega\acute{\eta}$] as linked to the person of Jesus is also present in Matt 19,29 par. Finally, to acknowledge the Jewish refusal to come to Jesus in order to have life could well be interpreted as a confirmation of Jesus’ assessment in Matt 7,14 that “the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it”.

²² BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 117.

²³ For this parallel cf. also D. L. BOCK, *Luke 9:51–24:53* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 1936.

²⁴ For this parallel cf. also ²⁷NA; A. J. KÖSTENBERGER, *John* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2004) 193; CARSON, *John*, 264.

²⁵ MORRIS, *John*, 293. This parallel is also mentioned by ²⁷NA, as well as BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 117; BROWN, *John* (i-xii), 225.

In John 5,41 Jesus explains that he does “not accept glory from human beings”. In the context of this discourse Jesus is saying that he is not depending on human praise and testimony²⁶. No direct parallel from Jesus to this statement can be found in the Synoptics. In Luke 4,24 par. [0/1-level of closeness], however, Jesus actually has to live without the praise and acceptance of people (and apparently was in a position to do so).

Due to his intimate knowledge of his hearers, Jesus is then able to address them in John 5,42 with another charge: “you do not have the love of God in you [τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ]”, i.e., they are not a people who love God. This, again, is no Johannine idiosyncrasy since in the Synoptics Jesus utters the exact same accusation in his woes against the Pharisees and their religious practices. For example, in Luke 11,42 he states: “you (...) neglect justice and the love of God [τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ]” [1/2-level of closeness]²⁷. More generally, one might add that Mark 12,30 par. confirms that dedication to and love for God are certainly core concerns of Jesus’ preaching: “you shall love [ἀγαπήσεις] the Lord your God [τὸν θεόν] with all your heart (...)” [thus a possible 1/1-level of closeness]²⁸.

John 5,43a and 5,43b reiterates that Jesus is not on a self-appointed mission but is authorized by the Father and thus subordinate to him: “I have come in my Father’s name”, yet, “you do not accept me”. That the Father stands behind the ministry of Jesus is expressed in different terms in Matt 11,27 par. (cf. Matt 21,9 par.), with Jesus maintaining that “all things have been handed over to me by my Father” [1/1-level of closeness; cf. the common usage of τοῦ πατρός μου], as well as in his announcement in Matt 23,39 par. that a time is coming when people will acknowledge him “who comes in the name of the Lord” [1/1-level of closeness]. A lack of acceptance of Jesus and his mission is likewise part of synoptic speech material, as in Matt 17,17 par., where Jesus calls his Jewish audience an “unbelieving generation” [0/1-level of closeness].

In 5,43c Jesus goes on to say that rather than accepting the God-sent Messiah, “if another comes in his own name, you will accept him”. The prediction of false, self-proclaimed prophets

²⁶ KEENER, *John*, I, 660.

²⁷ Luke 11,42 is listed as a Johannine parallel in the ²⁷NA margin.

²⁸ BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 117.

and messiahs is found in the Synoptics as well. Matt 24,5.24 par. is conceptually close to our Johannine proposition as Jesus warns that “many will come in my name, saying ‘I am the Messiah!’ and they will lead many astray” [1/2-level of closeness; cf. Matt 7,15]²⁹.

Finally, in John 5,44, the reason is named why Jesus’ hearers are indeed vulnerable to accepting the claims of false messiahs while at the same time neglecting the witness of the Father to the Christ he had sent. They are more eager “to accept glory from one another” rather than “to seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God”. It is the same misguided mindset that the Synoptic Jesus detects in his pharisaic opponents in Matt 23,5-7. Far from longing to receive glory from God, they “do all their deeds to be seen [and honored and respected] by others” [0/2-level of closeness]³⁰. Elsewhere, in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 6,1) Jesus likewise warns against a kind of religiousness that places more importance on human praise while losing sight of what actually matters most — divine approval: “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven” [0/2-level of closeness; cf. Luke 11,43; 20,46]³¹.

²⁹ For this parallel cf. ²⁷NA; KÖSTENBERGER, *John*, 193; RIDDERBOS, *John*, 206; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, 179; also B. SCHWANK, *Evangelium nach Johannes* (St. Ottilien 1998) 188: “Wir meinen also, daß die Synoptiker und Johannes dieselbe Tradition über viele andere, die kommen und sich zu unrecht einen Namen machen, aufgegriffen haben”.

³⁰ The Matthean woes against the Pharisees are mentioned as parallels to the Johannine tradition by, e.g., SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, II, 180; T. ZAHN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (KNT 4; Leipzig 1921) 317; H. THYEN, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HNT 6; Tübingen 2005) 328-329; as well as BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 117. Cf. also BROWN, *John (i-xii)*, 229: “(...) we find similar condemnations of sterile tradition and the seeking of praise in Matt xxiii”.

³¹ For this parallel, see also SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium*, II, 180.

4. *The Witness of Scripture (John 5,45-47)*

[5,45a]		
Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father;	[0/0]	
[5,45b]		[Mark 7,6-13 par.]
<u>your accuser is Moses</u> , on whom you have set your hope.	[0/1]	Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; (...) <u>For Moses said</u> , 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.' <u>But you say</u> (...)
[5,46]		[Luke 24,44]
If <u>you believed Moses</u> [Μωϋσσει], <u>you would believe me</u> , for he wrote [ἔγραψεν] <u>about me</u> .	[1/2]	<u>everything written</u> [τὰ γεγραμμένα] <u>about me in the law of Moses</u> [Μωϋσέως], <u>the prophets</u> , and the psalms must be fulfilled.
		[Matt 5,17]
	[0/2]	<u>Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.</u>
[5,47]		[Luke 16,31]
<u>But if you do not believe what he wrote</u> [τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν; cf. 5,46], <u>how will you believe what I say?</u>	[1/2]	<u>If they do not listen to Moses</u> [Μωϋσέως; cf. 5,46] <u>and the prophets</u> , neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.

In these last verses of the discourse, Jesus introduces a third witness to his person and ministry, arguing that it is the Scriptures that testify to the validity of his claims. This statement must have shocked the Jews, who boasted in their knowledge of and obedience to Scripture and set their hopes on Moses as their intercessor and ad-

vocate³². There is no need, says Jesus in John 5,45a, for him to stand up as their accuser: “Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father”. Rather, according to John 5,45b, it is Moses, their esteemed lawgiver, who is a continuing witness against them: “your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope”. While Jesus’ denial of being the ultimate accuser is without significant synoptic counterpart [0/0-level of closeness], 5,45b has at least some conceptual similarity to Mark 7,6-13 par. (cf. also Matt 12,41-42 par.). In this utterance the Synoptic Jesus not only likewise invokes another Old Testament writer as an accuser against the Jews (“Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites”), but also points out that significant parts of their religious rules indeed contradict Mosaic teaching (“For Moses said ... But you say ...”) [0/1-level of closeness].

Jesus then directly addresses the witness of Scripture in John 5,46-47, saying: “If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote [ἔγραψεν] about me. But if you do not believe what he wrote [τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν], how will you believe what I say?” This probably refers to a misguided way of reading Scripture. “The reason why Moses would accuse them was that he, as the lawgiver, knew the law’s true purpose. (...) [Jesus] refers to the Jews’ failure to grasp the true essence of the Scriptures, including their prophetic orientation toward Jesus”³³. The content of these last two verses of the discourse shows a close resemblance to Jesus’ teaching in the Synoptics. The other Gospels clearly address the unwillingness of the Jews to listen truly to the Scriptures in general and to the writings of Moses in particular, thus resulting in a lack of understanding of what these writings are about. At the end of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16,31, Jesus has Father Abraham say: “If they do not listen to Moses [Μωϋσέως] and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead” [1/2-level of closeness]³⁴. Both John and the Synoptics maintain that Jesus’ teaching is in line with revered scriptures, and accordingly both conclude that “one’s response to Jesus is an indicator of how one has re-

³² Cf. KÖSTENBERGER, *John*, 194; as well as CARSON, *John*, 265-66; MORRIS, *John*, 295.

³³ KÖSTENBERGER, *John*, 195.

³⁴ Luke 16,31 is mentioned as a synoptic parallel to John 5,46-47 by NA²⁷; BLOMBERG, *Historical Reliability*, 117; CARSON, *John*, 266; KEENER, *John*, I, 661; cf. also KÖSTENBERGER, *John*, 195, n. 107.

sponded to Moses and the prophets”³⁵. Moreover, that the Scriptures actually point to and testify about Jesus as the expected Messiah is likewise a common theme in the other three Gospels. After his resurrection, Jesus tells the disciples in Luke 24,44 “that everything written [γεγραμμένα] about me in the law of Moses [Μωϋσέως], the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled” [1/2-level of closeness; cf. Luke 24,27]. In Matt 5,17 Jesus explains that he himself is indeed the fulfillment of “the law and the prophets” [0/2-level of closeness]³⁶. Additionally, without direct reference to Mosaic writings but alluding to other Old Testament scripture, the point made by Luke 4,21 and 18,31 somewhat resembles Jesus’ Johannine statement in essence: “Today this scripture [ἡ γραφή] has been fulfilled in your hearing” and “everything that is written [τὰ γεγραμμένα] about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished” [thus possible 1/1 -levels of closeness].

* *
*

More than four decades ago, C.H. Dodd’s comparative analysis of John 5,19-30 led him to conclude that the words of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, though couched in uniquely Johannine idiom, convey a message that corresponds conceptually to a significant degree with the teaching of the Synoptic Jesus. The method introduced in this essay was developed in order to put these provisional inferences of Dodd to the test. In doing so, our primary task has been to address the question whether the prevalent negative verdict about the authenticity of Jesus’ words in the Fourth Gospel can be legitimately deduced from assumed differences between John and the Synoptics. Our approach was exemplified in this article through a detailed examination of those Johannine words immediately following the verses tackled by Dodd.

After a close comparison between the latter part of Jesus’ discourse in John 5 and the Synoptic Gospels, we find ourselves in basic agreement with Dodd’s preliminary observations. Thus, we conclude (at least for this particular section) that to deny the possible authenticity of Jesus’ words in the Fourth Gospel based upon an alleged incoherence with synoptic teaching is hardly justified in light of the

³⁵ BOCK, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, 1378.

³⁶ For this parallel cf. also KEENER, *John*, I, 661; as well as KÖSTENBERGER, *John*, 195.

evidence. Having established the methodological necessity for a distinction between wording and content, our study has shown that while semantically the Jesus of John 5,31-47 does not stand in close proximity to the Synoptic Jesus, conceptually only two propositions of this discourse (John 5,33a.45a) have no parallel in Matthew, Mark, or Luke (i.e., a [0/0-level of closeness]). Further, none of these Johannine words significantly add to or even contradict the theology of the Synoptic Jesus. Not only are there no significant dissimilarities or contradictions in content, but the main propositions of this discourse section resemble conceptually (some to a lesser, some to a greater degree) the teaching of Jesus as represented elsewhere in the canonical Gospels. While the motif of the Father testifying to Jesus is not absent in the Synoptics (John 5,31-32.36.37b par., Luke 11,20 par.; Matt 11,4-5 par. [0/1-level of closeness]), the reference to the Baptist as another important witness to his ministry is completely in line with Jesus' synoptic teaching (John 5,33b-35 par., Matt 11,7-11 par. [0/2-level of closeness]; cf. also Mark 11,30-33). Other key themes of Johannine thought likewise resemble the Synoptic Gospels, such as the Father sending the Son (John 5,37a.38b.[36] par., Matt 10,40; Luke 10,16 [0/2-level of closeness]), the lack of belief and refusal to come to Jesus (John 5,38b.40.43 par.; Matt 17,17 par.; 21,32 par.; 23,37 par.; Luke 15,28 [1/1- and 1/2-levels of closeness]), the charge against his hearers for not seeking the glory of God (John 5,44 par.; Matt 6,1-2.5.16; 23,5-7 [0/2-level of closeness]), as well as the allegation of not having the word and the love of God in them (John 5,38a.42 par.; Mark 4,16-17; Luke 11,42 [1/2-level of closeness]). Finally, the testimony of Scripture about Jesus is obviously a prominent theme in John's synoptic counterparts as well (John 5,39.45b-47 par.; Luke 24,44; Matt 5,17; Luke 16,31 [1/2- and 0/2-levels of closeness]).

A few years before Dodd, W.F. Albright, commenting on the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics, argued that "there is no fundamental difference in teaching between John and the Synoptics, (...) [and] there is absolutely nothing to show that any of Jesus' teachings have been distorted or falsified, or that a vital new element has been added to them"³⁷. In regard to the Johannine discourse section examined in this article, our findings have proved his

³⁷ W.F. ALBRIGHT, "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and The Gospel of John", *The Background of the NT and Its Eschatology* (eds. W.D. DAVIES – D. DAUBE) (Cambridge 1956) 170-171.

statement to be true. And while it is true that the parallels at large point toward a considerable degree of development or redaction of speech material on the part of the Fourth Evangelist³⁸, this is far from saying — as scholars of the Fourth Gospel have frequently done — that the differences in terms of content are insurmountable. Rather, we should not lose sight of the fact that the general thrust of Jesus' teaching is consistently reproduced in both major strands of gospel tradition despite the existing distinctions in the way the Fourth Evangelist has handled his discourse material. Therefore, we conclude, at least as far as John 5,31-47 is concerned, that on the basis of such detailed comparison with the Synoptics no strong evidence can be produced against this Johannine discourse as an authentic representation of the actual content of Jesus' teaching.

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SUMMARY

Within Johannine scholarship, the assumed differences between Jesus' teaching in John and in the Synoptics have frequently led to a negative judgment about Johannine authenticity. This article proposes a comparative approach that distinguishes between different levels of similarity in wording and content and applies it to John 5,31-47. What we find in this discourse section corresponds conceptually to a significant degree with the picture offered in the Synoptics, though couched in a very different idiom. Thus, the comparative evidence does not preclude us from accepting this particular part of Johannine speech material as an authentic representation of the actual content of Jesus' words.

³⁸ Cf. chapter 7 "The Johannine Discourses and the Teaching of Jesus in the Synoptics: A Tentative Characterization", BARTHOLOMÄ, *The Johannine Discourses*, 249-276.

“Seek His Kingdom”: Q 12,22b-31, God’s Providence, and Adamic Wisdom ¹

Since the 1960s, the dominant formative element in the composition of Q has been identified as instructional wisdom². The author of Q drew from the literary conventions, style, rhetoric and content of Jewish wisdom literature³. Jesus and John are “Wisdom’s children” (Q 7,35). Wisdom sends out prophets who are rejected (Q 11,49-51; Q 13,34-35). Wisdom weeps for her people who refuse to listen to Jesus. The Inaugural Sermon, which includes the beatitudes, teachings on loving enemies, practicing non-violence, unconditional love, compassion, and non-judgment indicate a sapiential orientation. The Jesus of Q is greater even than Solomon, with all his wisdom (Q 11,31-32). This paper will examine Q 12,22b-31 as a test case to examine the nature, extent, and range of the wisdom tradition in Q.

I. Wisdom and Apocalypticism in Q

The dominant consensus in contemporary Q studies is that Q was written in stages⁴, and a number of sapiential “speeches” constituted the formative clusters around which Q grew⁵.

¹ A shorter version of this paper was presented in the Wisdom and Apocalypticism Section at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, November 23, 2009.

² J.M. ROBINSON, “ΛΟΓΟΙ ΣΟΦΩΝ: Zur Gattung der Spruchquelle Q,” in *Zeit und Geschichte: Dankesgabe an Rudolf Bultmann* (ed. E. DINKLER) (Tübingen, 1964) 77-96; J.S. KLOPPENBORG, *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Christian Wisdom Collections* (Philadelphia, PA 1987).

³ G. STANTON, “On the Christology of Q,” *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament* (eds. B. LINDARS – S.S. SMALLEY) (Cambridge 1973).

⁴ D. LÜHRMANN, *Die Redaktion der Logienquelle* (WUNT 33; Neukirchener-Vluyn 1969) 84; S. SCHULZ, *Q: Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten* (Zürich 1972) 57-175; D. ZELLER, *Die Weisheitlichen Mahnsprüche bei den Synoptikern* (FzB 17; Würzburg 1977) 191; R.A. PIPER, *Wisdom in the Q-Tradition. The Aphoristic Sayings of Jesus* (SNTSMS 61; New York 1989).

⁵ G. THEISSEN, *The First Followers of Jesus. A Sociological Analysis of the Earliest Christianity* (London 1978); P. HOFFMANN, *Studien zur Theologie der Logienquelle* (Münster 1972).

By the late 1980s, this “consensus”, best represented by John Kloppenborg’s compositional model, had become a working hypothesis for many, and a foundation for further work on the social history of Q, the “Cynic hypothesis”, the “re-description” of the kerygmatic picture of Christian origins, and the question of whether the historical Jesus was a sapiential or apocalyptic figure⁶. This has resulted in considerable discussion and debate in the field, and this hypothesis is not without its critics⁷. John Collins, for example, focuses on generic issues, arguing that many apocalyptic writers absorbed wisdom and integrated it into their worldview and work⁸. Consequently, there is “no necessary antithesis” between “apocalyptic” and “sapiential.” Richard Horsley argues against a dichotomization of wisdom and apocalyptic in Q scholarship, claiming that these modern, scholarly categories were being deployed for theological purposes⁹. He emphasizes the need to focus on “the concrete historical social relations” in which texts are rooted¹⁰, and considers Q a unified composition. Christopher Tuckett has also questioned how we identify and categorize “sapiential” material, and reminds us that “wisdom” is a modern scholarly category¹¹. Tuckett questions Q’s identification as “sapiential” because it does not conform to traditional wisdom orientations. He notes that the figure of Wisdom is present in Q, but only appears in the allegedly redactional stratum of Q, where prophetic themes predominate. Tuckett

⁶ B.L. MACK, “The Kingdom that Didn’t Come: The Social History of the Q Tradents”, *Society of Biblical Literature Papers 1988* (ed. D.J. LULL) (Atlanta, GA 1988) 608-635.

⁷ ALLISON, *The Jesus Tradition in Q*, 4-7; C.M. TUCKETT, *Q and the History of Early Christianity*. Studies on Q (Edinburgh 1996) 69-75; D. ZELLER, “Eine weisheitliche Grundschrift in der Logienquelle?”, *The Four Gospels* (ed. F.V. SEGBROECK) (BETL 100; Leuven 1992) I: 389-401; H.W. ATTRIDGE, “Reflections on Research into Q,” *Semeia* 55 (1992) 223-234; M. SATO, “Wisdom Statements in the Sphere of Prophecy”, *The Gospel Behind the Gospels*. Current Studies in Q (ed. R.A. PIPER) (NTSup 75; Leiden 1995) 157.

⁸ J.J. COLLINS, “Wisdom, Apocalypticism, and Generic Compatibility”, *In Search of Wisdom*. Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie (eds. L.G. PERDUE – B.B. SCOTT – W.J. WISEMAN) (Louisville, KY 1993) 165-185.

⁹ R.A. HORSLEY, “Questions about Redactional Strata and the Social Relations Reflected in Q”, *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 28* (Atlanta, GA 1989) 186-203, 188; “Wisdom and Apocalypticism in Mark,” 223-244, esp. 226; “Wisdom Justified”, 733, 744-745.

¹⁰ R.A. HORSLEY, “Q and Jesus: Assumptions, Approaches, and Analyses”, *Semeia* 55 (1991) 177.

¹¹ TUCKETT, *Q*, 329.

also questions the claim that there was any unified collection of sayings prior to this redaction as well as the late dating to the most explicitly non-mistic elements in Q. It may be “misleading” to think of Q (or even Q¹) as sapiential and preferable to give “methodological priority” to Q in its “final” form.

Critics have not always engaged the literary-critical aspects of Kloppenborg’s argument, which does not depend on any presumed (in)compatibility between wisdom and apocalyptic, but rather “from an analysis of the actual literary deployment of Q sayings”. Moreover, Kloppenborg has consistently maintained that literary analysis is “not convertible with tradition history”¹². A fair evaluation of this hypothesis, therefore, would require careful analysis of the alleged “stratigraphic markers” that identify the seams and strata of Q. This has been done elsewhere¹³. There are reasonably persuasive alternative arguments to positing complex redaction-histories that stratify traditions and social histories.

Q draws on sapiential, prophetic, eschatological and apocalyptic perspectives because these were interrelated components of the Jewish tradition from which it emerged. There is nothing incompatible about wisdom and apocalyptic traditions being present in a single text. Q and *4QInstruction* appear to belong to a “wisdom trajectory” in the late Second Temple period. Matthew Goff identifies *4QInstruction*, like Q, as a sapiential text with an apocalyptic worldview”. *4QInstruction* illustrates that sapiential and apocalyptic material can co-exist in the same text¹⁴. First-century Judaism was influenced by eschatological and apocalyptic orientations. Constructing a non-eschatological, non-apocalyptic Jesus risks misrepresenting first-century Judaism, the Jesus movement and the historical Jesus. There are close relationships between wisdom as worldly knowledge and wisdom as revealed knowledge. Wisdom and apocalyptic, as distinct categories, have blurred boundaries that should not be over-reified for ideological purposes. George Nickelsburg warns that “our cate-

¹² J.S. KLOPPENBORG VERBIN, *Excavating Q*. The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel (Edinburgh, 2000) 145, n. 61; KLOPPENBORG, *The Formation of Q*, 245.

¹³ A. KIRK, *The Composition of the Sayings Source*. Genre, Synchrony, and Wisdom Redaction in Q (NTSup 91; Leiden 1998) 26.

¹⁴ M.J. GOFF, “Discerning Trajectories: 4QInstruction and the Sapiential Background of the Sayings Source Q”, *JBL* 124 (2005) 659, 669; *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction* (STDJ 50; Leiden 2003) 216, 218.

gories have become hermetically sealed compartments”¹⁵. We “fail to see that in the world from which they have come to us, they were related parts of an organic whole”. The terms “wisdom” and “apocalyptic” may be unavoidable, but these remain “flawed categories”. The problem is not “in the texts, but in the categories and methods that we have used to describe and interpret them”. We cannot easily separate traditions and genres that belong together without creating an ahistorical abstraction, i.e., an ideological construction. Q reflects a movement comprised of both sapiential and eschatological beliefs¹⁶, and while there is nothing especially controversial about positing Q as an early collection of Jesus’ sayings redacted from the perspective of a perceived rejection of the movement, this may have very little bearing on when the text was composed or edited, where it came from and how it relates to the historical Jesus.

The stratification of Q simply cannot easily support the weight of radical re-descriptions of the social history of Q, the historical Jesus or Christian origins, and so the deployment of the categories “wisdom” and “apocalyptic” to promote such attempts by constructing a dichotomous relationship between the two must be approached with due caution. Indeed, nowhere is this debate more problematic than in exegetical approaches to the kingdom of God tradition.

II. The Kingdom in Q

The “kingdom (“reign” or “rule”) of God” is a central theme of Jesus’ ministry¹⁷.

¹⁵ G.W.E. NICKELSBURG, “Wisdom and Apocalypticism in Early Judaism: Some Points for Discussion”, *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism* (SBL SS 35) (eds. B.G. WRIGHT III –L.M. WILLS) (Atlanta, GA 2005) 17-37, esp. 36-37.

¹⁶ M. SATO, “Wisdom Statements in the Sphere of Prophecy”, *The Gospel Behind the Gospels. Current Studies on Q* (ed. R.A. PIPER) (NTSup 75; Leiden 1995) 139-158; C.E. CARLSTON, “Wisdom and Eschatology in Q”, *Logia. Les Paroles de Jésus. Memorial Joseph Coppens* (ed. J. DELOBEL) (Leuven 1982) 101-119, esp. 116; EDWARDS, *A Theology of Q*, 78.148; J.S. KLOPPENBORG, “Symbolic Eschatology and the Apocalypticism of Q”, *HTR* 80 (1987) 287-306, esp. 291.

¹⁷ B. CHILTON (ed.), *The Kingdom of God* (Philadelphia, PA 1984); C.H. DODD, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New York 1961); R.H. HIERS, *The*

Generally, the expression refers to the belief that God was the king of Israel. The phrase is also linked to traditional ideas of royal ideology and divine kingship. The idea that God was “king” is fairly widespread in contemporary Jewish literature, particularly in the Dead Sea Scrolls (1QM 12.7; 6.6; 4Q491 11 ii 17; 4Q252 1 5.3-4; 4Q521; 4Q400 1ii1, 4Q400 1ii3, 4Q401 14i6). The idea that Jesus proclaimed the arrival of the kingdom of God is consistent with contemporary Jewish culture. The announcement of the long-awaited and now imminent arrival of the reign, rule or kingdom of God in first-century Judea and Galilee would indeed have sounded like a revelation of the end-time.

The temporal nature of the “kingdom” has long been debated. Was it to arrive in the near future¹⁸? Or was it already present¹⁹? Or was it somehow both²⁰? Some passages seem to confirm that Jesus referred to the kingdom as a heavenly, transcendent realm to be entered at death (Mark 9,47; 10,17-22; Matt 7,21). Others suggest that the kingdom will be made manifest on earth in the future as a divinely transformed human society²¹. Still other passages refer to the kingdom as imminent in the near future (Mark 1,15, Matt 10,7, 16,28, Luke 9,27, 10,9; Q 11,2; Q 6,20-23; Q 13,28-29; Matt 10,23, Mark 9,1, Mark 13,30). There are also passages where the kingdom is described as being present (Luke 17,20, Matt 12,28, Luke 1,20, 1,2-6).

The “kingdom” appears eleven times in Q (Q 6,20; 7,28; 10,5-9; 11,20; 11,52; 12,31; 13,18-19; 13,20-21; 13,29-28; 16,16; 17,20-21). It is the central theme of Q’s theology and forms the basis of

Kingdom of God in the Synoptic Tradition (Gainesville, FL 1970); W.G. KÜMMEL, *Promise and Fulfillment*. The Eschatological Message of Jesus (SBT 23; London 1957); G.E. LADD, “The Kingdom of God – Reign or Realm?” *JBL* 81 (1962) 230-238; N. PERRIN, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom*. Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation (Philadelphia, PA 1976).

¹⁸ A. SCHWEITZER, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede (New York 1910).

¹⁹ DODD, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 34-110; G. B. CAIRD, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia, PA 1980) 243-271; J.P. MEIER, *A Marginal Jew* (New York 1991) II, 398-506; N.T. WRIGHT, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London 1996) II, 320-368.

²⁰ KÜMMEL, *Promise and Fulfillment*; PERRIN, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom*, 29-34.

²¹ E.P. SANDERS, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London 1993) 173-178, esp. 174.

the early Jesus movement's lifestyle, ethic and existence²². It is the focus of the community's missionary activity and expectations (Q 9,62; 11,2; 12,29-31). It is symbolized by growth and expansion (Q 13,20). It is the goal of the discipleship advocated throughout Q.

The kingdom is for the “poor” (Q 6,20). In Q 7,28, those now entering the kingdom are greater than John the Baptist (Q 7,28). Jesus instructs his disciples to heal the sick; the kingdom has reached them (Q 10,5-9). Jesus tells his opponents that if demons are being expelled through his ministry, then the “kingdom of God has come upon you” (Q 11,20). Jesus criticizes the “exegetes of the law” for not allowing people into the kingdom (Q 11,52). The kingdom grows from something small into something great (Q 13,18-19; 20-21). The kingdom suffers violence (Q 16,16). According to Q 17,20-21, the “kingdom” is present within (ἐντός)²³. The kingdom is clearly dawning (if not already present) in Jesus' ministry.

1. “Seek His Kingdom”: Q 12,22b-31

Q 12,22b-31 is generally categorized (form-critically) as a “wisdom” collection, along with other early Q wisdom instruction collections on prayer and faith (Q 6,20-49; 11,2b-4, 9-13). The “wisdom” of Q 12,22b-31, however, is not very “worldly”. Jesus' assurance that God will provide seems to contradict worldly experience where human beings generally earn a living by the “sweat of their brow”. What *kind* of “wisdom”, therefore, is being offered here?

The reconstruction of Q 12,22b-31 is complicated by the possibility that the *Gospel of Thomas* (P.Oxy. 655) contains an earlier reading of this saying²⁴. Developing a proposal by T.C. Skeat, James Robinson and Christoph Heil have argued that Q 12,22b-31 can be traced back to a “pre-Q text” used by Matthew and Luke which closely resembles the reading found in *Thomas* 36, as preserved in

²² KLOPPENBORG, *The Formation of Q*, 241-42; KLOPPENBORG VERBIN, *Excavating Q*, 392-394.

²³ J.M. ROBINSON, “The Study of the Historical Jesus after Nag Hammadi”, *Semeia* 44 (1988) 45-55.

²⁴ B.P. GRENFELL – A.S. HUNT, *New Sayings of Jesus and Fragment of a Lost Gospel from Oxyrhynchus* (London 1904) 39-47; ID., *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri IV* (London 1904) 22-28.

P. Oxy. 655 and Codex Sinaiticus at Matt 6:28²⁵. Robinson and Heil argue that a number of conjectured redactional “insertions” in Q proposed by scholars (independently of any consideration of *P. Oxy.* 655 and also omitted in *P. Oxy.* 655) indicate that the *Thomas* tradition preserved an earlier, simpler version of the saying found in Q. Robinson and Heil argue that the “original” climax was that your Father will provide the basic necessities of food, drink and clothing (Q 12,29, 30b). *P. Oxy.* 655 does, however, declare God’s providence (“That one will give you your clothing!”), which is strikingly reminiscent of the meaning of Q 12,31.

The problem pivots on whether Skeat, Robinson, and Heil’s reconstruction of [ο]ὐ ξα[ί]νει (“they do not card”) in *P. Oxy.* 655 is to be preferred to [α]ὐξάνει (“they grow”). The literary-critical arguments deployed to establish *P. Oxy.* 655 as preserving an early tradition earlier than Q are contested and inconclusive²⁶. *P. Oxy.* 655 may be a secondary, redacted version of the Q saying. Jens Schröter affirms that “P.Oxy. biete eine interessante, nachsynoptische Fassung der Sorgensprüche”, but argues that Robinson and Heil’s thesis is “in jeder Hinsicht unhaltbare Konstruktion”²⁷. This matter is not settled and requires further analysis. Yet the problem in adjudicating between rival positions extends far beyond text-critical matters towards questions of authenticity, wisdom, eschatology, and the meaning of the “kingdom”.

²⁵ T.C. SKEAT, “The Lilies of the Field”, *ZNW* 37 (1938) 211-214; J.M. ROBINSON, “The Pre-Q Text of the (Ravens and) Lilies: Q 12:22-31 and P.Oxy. 655 (*Gos. Thom.* 36)”, *Text und Geschichte. Facetten theologischen Arbeitens aus dem Freundes- und Schülerkreis. Dieter Lührmann zum 60. Geburtstag* (eds. S. MASER – E. SCHLARB) (MThSt 50; Marburg 1999) 143-180; J.M. ROBINSON – C. HEIL, “A Pre-Canonical Greek Reading in Saying 36 of the Gospel of Thomas”, *The Sayings Gospel Q. Collected Essays* (eds. J. VERHEYDEN – C. HEIL) (BETL 189; Leuven 2005) 845-883.

²⁶ R.H. GUNDRY, “Spinning the Lilies and Unraveling the Ravens: An Alternative Reading of Q 12:22b-31 and P. Oxy. 655”, ID., *The Old is Better. New Testament Essays in Support of Traditional Interpretations* (WUNT 178; Tübingen 2005) 149-170; J. SCHRÖTER, “Vorsynoptische Überlieferung auf P.Oxy. 655? Kritische Bemerkungen zu einer erneuerten These”, *ZNW* 90 (1999) 265-272; ID. “Verschreiben? Klärende Bemerkungen zu einem vermeintlichen Schreibfehler in Q und tatsächlichen Irrtümern”, *ZNW* 92 (2001) 283-289; S.E. PORTER, “P.Oxy.655 and James Robinson’s Proposals for Q: Brief Points of Clarification”, *JTS* 52 (2001) 84-92, esp. 92.

²⁷ SCHRÖTER, “Verschreiben?”, 289.

A number of scholars hold that Q 12,22b-31 is a "collection" of once-independent sapiential sayings subsequently expanded into its present form²⁸. Q 12,31, in particular, is the most problematic verse, primarily because it represents an "intrusion" of kingdom-language into an otherwise sapiential collection²⁹. Others have argued that Q 12,22b-31 is essentially integral, and that Q 12,31 was the original climax of the collection³⁰. Moreover, many scholars affirm Q 12,31 as an authentic saying of Jesus³¹:

ζητεῖτε δὲ τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ταῦτα προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν.

Seek His Kingdom
And these things will be given to you.

The reconstruction of Q has resulted in the identification of Matthean and Lukan redactional traits and corrections, many of which are relatively minor. For example, many scholars regard Q 12,25 as a

²⁸ R. BULTMANN, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (Oxford 1963) 88; D. ZELLER, *Die weisheitlichen Mahnsprüche bei den Synoptikern* (FB 17; Würzburg, 1983) 86-87; E. KLOSTERMANN, *Matthäusevangelium* (HNT 2/1; Tübingen 1909) 62; TUCKETT, *Q*, 149; CATCHPOLE, *The Quest for Q*, 31-35; P. HOFFMANN, *Tradition und Situation. Studien zur Jesusüberlieferung in der Logienquelle und den synoptischen Evangelien* (NA 28; Münster 1995) 62-87, 88-106, 107-134.

²⁹ P.S. MINER, *Commands of Christ* (Nashville, TN 1972) 139-140; D. ZELLER, *Die weisheitlichen Mahnsprüche bei den Synoptikern* (FB 17; Würzburg 1977) 87; ROBINSON, "The Pre-Q Text", 165; A.D. JACOBSON, *The First Gospel. An Introduction to Q* (Sonoma, 1992) 190; HOFFMANN, *Tradition und Situation*, 93, 113.

³⁰ W. GRUNDMANN, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (THKNT 1; Berlin 1968) 214; SCHULZ, *Spruchquelle*, 154; R.A. GUELICH, *The Sermon on the Mount. A Foundation for Understanding* (Waco, TX 1982) 323, 335; H. MERKLEIN, *Die Gottesherrschaft als Handlungsprinzip* (Würzburg 1978) 177-180; R.J. DILLON, "Ravens, Lilies, and the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:25-33/Luke 12:22-31)", CBQ 53 (1991) 605-627; esp. 626.

³¹ I.H. MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Exeter, NH 1978) 525; LUZ, *Matthew 1-7*; H. HENDRICKX, *The Sermon on the Mount. Studies in the Synoptic Gospels* (London 1984) 133; GUELICH, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 323, 335; CATCHPOLE, *Quest for Q*, 39.

“secondary insertion”³². Many scholars also agree that Matthew has added *πρῶτον* in order to give priority to the “seeking” of the kingdom³³. Seeking the kingdom comes first, although Matthew has “softened” the blow of this radical saying by allowing for secondary concern over food and clothing despite the fact that “the underlying tradition said precisely the opposite”³⁴. “Seeking” (*ζητέω*) is an active pursuit, a striving after something desired³⁵. In sapiential literature, “seeking” for Wisdom is a common motif (Prov 2,4, 14,6, 15,14, 18,15; Qoh 7,25; Wis 6,12; Sir 4,11-12, 6,27, 51,13). Yet Wisdom is not mentioned in this passage. It is not “wisdom” that one is to seek, but the “kingdom.” One is “to give oneself unreservedly to the pursuit of the Kingdom”³⁶.

Robinson and Heil have suggested that scholars supporting the authenticity of Q 12:31 may be biased by the “theological presupposition” of Jesus’ allegedly eschatological orientation”³⁷. Robinson criticizes those who “automatically” take the kingdom to be “a future reference by Jesus”, but whether Q 12,31 is “futuristic” or not depends quite a bit on what one means by “eschatology” and “kingdom”. Robinson argues that the “original” collection asserted that God’s constant care did not require the “nearness or the inbreaking of the kingdom... Apparently it is not necessary also to refer to the *βασιλεία* as an explanation for God’s constant care”³⁸. Robinson, however, is hardly free of his own theological interests, which in-

³² J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV*. Introduction, Translation and Notes (AB 28A; Garden City, NY 1985) 976; R.C. TANNEHILL, *The Sword of his Mouth*. Forceful and Imaginative Language in Synoptic Sayings (SBL SS 1; Philadelphia, PA 1975) 60-61.

³³ R. GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 118; G. STRECKER, *The Sermon on the Mount*. An Exegetical Commentary (Nashville, TN 1988) 140; HENDRICKX, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 146; CATCHPOLE, *Quest for Q*, 37.

³⁴ CATCHPOLE, *Quest for Q*, 37; G. AGRELL, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*. An Examination of the View of Work in the New Testament, Taking into Consideration Views found in the Old Testament, Intertestamental, and Early Rabbinic Writings (Lund 1976) 73.

³⁵ H. GREEVEN, “*ζητέω*,” *TDNT* II, 893 n.5. See 1 Cor 4,2; Matt 28,5; John 8,50; Matt 26,59; Phil 2,21.

³⁶ GUELICH, *The Sermon*, 344. PIPER, *Wisdom in the Q Tradition*, 31.

³⁷ ROBINSON, “The Pre-Q Text”, 177.

³⁸ R.A. PIPER, “Wealth, Poverty, and Substinence in Q”, *From Quest to Q*. Festschrift James M. Robinson (ed. J.M.A. ASGEIRSSON et al.) (BETL 146; Leuven 2000) 219-264, 247.

clude the reconstruction of an early and purely sapiential stratum of Q and the promotion of the *Gospel of Thomas* as a significant (non-canonical) source of authentic Jesus tradition.

Whether or not Q 12,31 originated as a wisdom statement with an “eschatological background”³⁹, with perhaps Jesus making “use of wisdom material”, the reference to the “kingdom” presupposes “some kind of eschatological expectation”, even if it is not perhaps “sufficiently intense to overpower the sapiential features of the argument”⁴⁰. The “kingdom” is an eschatological motif. Yet the “kingdom” is so central to the message of Jesus that it is rather bold to dissociate it from Q 12,22b-31⁴¹.

It is also difficult not to admit that the ethos of “wisdom” being encouraged in Q 12,22b-31 is “quite unlike the wisdom literature’s general expectation that human beings will and should work to sustain themselves”. The saying is “thoroughly impregnated with a powerful eschatological awareness and expectation”⁴². Q 12,22-31 “involves a resounding clash with the wisdom tradition which lavishly praises the worker and severely chides the non-worker”. Q “conflicts with the conventional wisdom of a text like Prov. 6:6 with its hard-headed observations about the diligence of the ant”⁴³. Kloppenborg reaches for middle ground by designating Q’s formative sapiential material as “the radical wisdom of the kingdom of God”⁴⁴, and this is precisely the point: sapiential forms, motifs, and strategies are being deployed to advance an eschatological message. Is Jesus recommending that his disciples not work because the “end” is coming⁴⁵? Or simply not

³⁹ M. SATO, “Wisdom Statements in the Sphere of Prophecy”, *The Gospel Behind the Gospels*. Current Studies in Q (ed. R.A. PIPER) (NTSup 75; Leiden 1995) 152.

⁴⁰ PIPER, *Wisdom in the Q Tradition*, 33, 31; KLOPPENBORG, *Formation of Q*, 220; KIRK, *The Composition of the Sayings Source*, 224-226, esp. 226.

⁴¹ MERKLEIN, *Die Gottesherrschaft*, 177, 180-181; LUZ, *Matthew 1-7*, 401-402, 407-408; J. GNILKA, *Das Matthäusevangelium. Kommentar zu Kap 1, 1-13,58* (HTKNT 1.1; Freiburg 1988) I, 251; R.J. DILLON, “Ravens, Lilies, and the Kingdom of God”, 605-627, 606, 626; BECKER, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 131-135.

⁴² TUCKETT, *Q*, 152.

⁴³ D. MEALAND, “‘Paradisial’ Elements in the Teaching of Jesus,” *Studia Biblica* 2 (1978) 183.

⁴⁴ KLOPPENBORG, *Formation of Q*, 242.

⁴⁵ D. CATCHPOLE, *Quest for Q*, 34-35; M.F. OLSTHOORN, *The Jewish Background and the Synoptic Setting of Mt 6,25-33 and Lk 12,22-31* (SBF 10; Jerusalem 1975) 5, 19, 27.

to worry about their needs, because God will supply them⁴⁶? The message seems to be that “‘God will provide’ without human labor”⁴⁷.

The admonition of the collection is to trust in God’s providence. Yet the introduction of the “kingdom” at the climax indicates that seeking the kingdom is the critical factor in receiving God’s providence. Q 12,31 transforms what could be interpreted as a simpler, “sapiential” saying into an eschatological tradition. We might even want to question whether the simple assertion of God’s providence without qualification or effort or requirement could be considered “traditional wisdom” at all. The point here is “devote your life to the Kingdom of God”⁴⁸. Q contrasts trust in God with the ways of the “nations”, which worry about their needs, and insists that needs “come to us as God’s gift” when the kingdom is a “constant consideration”⁴⁹.

Jesus gives specific instructions (“seek”) on how to receive God’s providence. God loves his sons and daughters and will provide for them, provided that they seek to have God “reign” over their lives, and have total trust he will do so. The present tense orientation of ζητεῖτε (“seek”) indicates that the “kingdom” is accessible in the present (otherwise we could not seek it), as does Q 17,21’s insistence that the kingdom can be found “within”. The “kingdom” should not be defined in an exclusively futuristic sense: the “reign of God” is a “way” of being. God’s providence is certainly a biblical theme (Gen 3,29; Ps 104,14, 145,15-19, Ps Sol 5,10), but there is a tension between pragmatic sapiential ideas about work, Genesis’ account that humanity would only earn its daily food through labor, and Q’s vision of God’s universal providence.

The “kingdom” can be seen, not as a catastrophic event nor as a politico-religious empire, but rather as a symbol-metaphor for God’s original intention for human-divine relationship. G. Agrell notes that the “kingdom” can be seen “as something not totally new, but a reinstatement, or a deliverance from the curse which has come over

⁴⁶ D.A. HAGNER, *Matthew 1-13* (WBC 33A; Dallas, TX 1993) I, 166-167; F.W. BEARE, *The Gospel According to Matthew. A Commentary* (Oxford 1981) 185.

⁴⁷ C.G. MONTEFIORE, *The Synoptic Gospels* (London 1927) I, 111-112.

⁴⁸ E. SCHWEIZER, *The Good News According to Matthew* (Atlanta, GA 1975) 164-166.

⁴⁹ J. NOLLAND, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC 35B; Dallas, TX 1993) 695-696.

creation”⁵⁰. The idea that the “kingdom” in Q 12,31 can be seen as a “new creation” or “a restoration of creation” is supported by Luke’s description of Jesus’ ministry coinciding with the year of God’s grace, or Jubilee (Luke 4,16), the year in which men don’t need to work, but can live on the Lord’s blessing. Q 12,22-31 also “shows several structural similarities to Gen. 2-3”. In Q, “there is no compulsion to procure one’s own sustenance. The exhortation points in a direction opposite to the curse in Gen 3,17-19”, that man will live on what the earth provides with “grief” (λύπη).

Human labor to gather earthly “treasures” and possessions is opposed to God’s will; human anxiety over food and clothing is also opposed to seeking God’s kingdom and will. This is a lack of faith in God’s providence. God is the one who provides. The “one called to be a disciple is provided for independently of his work, as in paradise, according to Gen. 2”. David Mealand has drawn attention to “Paradisial” elements in Q 12,22b-31, noting that it is “not unreasonable to see a connection between the expectation of the Reign of God and that of a return to the condition of Paradise”. Since “the need to worry about clothing, and the need to work for food came after the Fall” in Genesis, Jesus’ saying “seems to disregard the emphasis on the fall”, and demonstrates “a simple dependence on God characteristic of Paradisial conditions”⁵¹. This “tentative conclusion” can now be supplemented by further analysis of the christologies of Q.

III. The (Adamic) Wisdom and Christology of Q 12,22b-31

The following christological profiles can be identified in Q: (1) an early [proto-] Wisdom christology; (2) “son of man” traditions, (indirectly correlated to the “coming one”), with hints of [subversive] messianism; and (3) “Son of God” traditions, some of which may correspond to the kingdom of God just surveyed and yield clues to the literary identity and role of the figure who “proclaims” the “good news” of this wisdom. Let us briefly review.

⁵⁰ AGRELL, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*, 80-81.

⁵¹ MEALAND, “‘Paradisial’ Elements in the Teaching of Jesus”, 179, 182.

1. *The Wisdom Traditions*

Does Q contain a “Wisdom Christology”⁵²? Is the Jesus of Q an “incarnation” of Wisdom? Jesus was certainly regarded as a “teacher of wisdom”, and there are places in Q where Jesus is described in terms reminiscent of the description (and speech) of Wisdom in other Early Jewish texts. In Q 9,58, the “son of man” has nowhere to lay his head. Similarly, in *1 Enoch* 42,1-2, “Wisdom could not find a place in which she could dwell”. In Sirach 24,6-7, Wisdom is also portrayed as seeking to find a home in Israel. Interestingly, the Parabolic “son of man” has a special relationship with Wisdom, for “in him dwells the spirit of Wisdom” (*1 En* 49:3)⁵³. In Q 7,32-35, Jesus likens “this generation” to those “in the marketplace” who would not pay attention to the fluting or crying of children, although “Wisdom” was “justified/vindicated” by her “children.” In Proverbs 1:24-28, Wisdom calls out in the street and raises her voice in the public squares, but people do not pay heed to her call (Matt 11,29-30; Sir 6,19-31; 51,26). In Q 7,35, Jesus and John the Baptist are “Children of Wisdom (Sophia)”. In Q 11,49, Wisdom says that she will “send to them prophets and apostles and some of them they will kill and persecute”. In Q 13,34-35, Wisdom seems to issue a warning of judgment on Jerusalem.

Some scholars have seen in Q 10,21 evidence that Q’s Jesus speaks *as* Wisdom/Sophia⁵⁴. Q, however, never explicitly identifies Jesus with or as Wisdom. Jesus is Wisdom’s messenger and “child” in Q. Jesus mediates revelation between humanity and God, but it is the author of Matthew, not Q, who makes the theological “leap” in identifying Jesus as Wisdom⁵⁵. Early Christians ascribed to Jesus

⁵² W.A. BEARDSLEE, “The Wisdom Tradition and the Synoptic Gospels” *JAAR* 35 (1967) 231-240; J.S. KLOPPENBORG, “Wisdom Christology in Q”, *Laval théologique et philosophique* 34 (1978) 129-147; A. D. JACOBSON, “Wisdom Christology in Q” (Ph.D. dissertation, Claremont Graduate School 1978.)

⁵³ HOFFMANN, *Studien*, 181; R.G. HAMERTON-KELLY, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man* (SNTSMS 21; Cambridge 1973) 29; PIPER, *Wisdom*, 167; JACOBSON, *First Gospel*, 136; TUCKETT, *Q*, 181-182.

⁵⁴ E. NORDEN, *Agnostos Theos* (Leipzig-Berlin 1913) 277-308, 394-396; T. ARVEDSON, *Das Mysterium Christi* (Uppsala/Leipzig, 1937) 211.

⁵⁵ M.J. SUGGS, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law in Matthew’s Gospel* (Cambridge 1970) 19, 28, 96; LÜHRMANN, *Redaktion*, 99; HOFFMANN, *Studien*, 137; HAMERTON-KELLY, *Pre-existence*, 36; U. WILCKENS, *Weisheit und Torheit* (Tübingen 1959) 198; J.D.G. DUNN, *Christology in the Making* (London 1980) 197.

the role and function of Wisdom in the sapiential literature. Wisdom language was an appropriate way to identify and characterize Jesus as a teacher of revealed truths who mediated divine knowledge, wisdom, grace, and power. For example, Q 10,22 makes an exclusive claim that “no one knows the Son except the Father nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and to whomever the Son chooses to reveal him”. This is language strikingly reminiscent, even parallel to that used to describe Wisdom — as “hidden from man but known to God”⁵⁶. Q’s focus on Jesus as the “Son of God” is absolute and exclusive. While some scholars have sought the origin of this title in Hellenistic culture⁵⁷, or in Jesus’ use of ἀββᾶ, early Jewish apocalyptic texts from Qumran contain several examples of eschatological and royal figures being identified as “Son of God”. For example, 4Q246 describes a figure as the “Son of God” and the “Son of the Most High”. In Wisdom literature, the wise man is a “son of God” (Wis 2,13.18; Sir 4,11). In Q, the “Son” has special knowledge of the “Father”. The focus in Q is on Jesus as “Son” (υἱός) in relation to God as “Father” (πατήρ/ἀββᾶ).

2. *The Son of Man Traditions*

Jesus is not a “traditional messianic” figure in Q. Q never uses Χριστός. Jesus is the “Son of God”, the “son of man”, the “child of Wisdom”, the “Coming One”, and “Master/Lord”, but never Χριστός. So while there is indeed a “Wisdom” component in Q and a nexus between Q, Wisdom, and Christology, Q does not explicitly identify Jesus with Wisdom, but does explicitly identify him as the “Son of God”. In fact, Jesus is exalted above all others, including John, who is himself greater than all those born “among women’s offspring”. Is Q’s exalted portrayal of Jesus as “Son of God” derived from his identification as “son of man”? This does not seem likely. The identification of Jesus as son of man is based on post-Easter reflection on the exaltation of Jesus. Since the “one like a son of man” in Daniel 7,13 is a heavenly being and the “son of man” in the Parables is also a heavenly judge, it is reasonable to conclude that the expression was transferred to Jesus in Q. The identification of Jesus as the “son of man” created a distinctive new identity for Jesus as a heavenly judge representative of a rejected and persecuted group of the righteous.

⁵⁶ KLOPPENBORG, “Wisdom Christology”, 144.

⁵⁷ SCHULZ, *Spruchquelle*, 223; LÜHRMANN, *Redaktion*, 66.

This theme of rejection is a predominant characteristic of Q's redaction. The motif of the rejection of the prophets sent by Wisdom who suffer rejection and violence is neither Matthean nor Lukan, but rather distinctively "Q"⁵⁸. The son of man is "primarily a figure who arouses hostility and rejection". These sayings presuppose the perceived rejection of the Q community. A social boundary has been constructed between them and the rest of Israel. This division of us/them (the people of the "son of man" vs. "this generation") casts Jesus in the role of a judge who will punish non-believers.

The son of man sayings in Q were transmitted by a follower of Jesus deeply disappointed by the reception of the Jesus movement who came to adopt a sectarian stance of judging "this generation" for rejecting the message of the Jesus group. The son of man tradition in Q reflects this author/redactor's perceived rejection. The son of man sayings are strikingly consistent in this regard. Jesus, as the "son of man", does not "instruct" so much as pronounce judgment. The Inaugural Sermon, on the other hand, is not characteristic of the judgment motif typically associated with the "day of the son of man", but rather represents the quintessence of Jesus' wisdom instruction. It is difficult not to conclude that we are dealing with two "streams" of tradition in Q — one in which Jesus is the "Son of God" who teaches the "way" of the "kingdom", and a secondary stream or tradition in which Jesus is represented as the rejected "son of man" who will return as a heavenly judge to punish the wicked and reward the faithful. The former stream of tradition identifies Jesus as the "child of Wisdom", but this in itself is simply another way of saying that Jesus is the "son of (an aspect of) God". Jesus' identification as "Son of God" was associated with the wisdom tradition but is not fully explained by that tradition. Is there another model that might help explain this nexus of Wisdom and Christology in Q?

3. *The Son of God Traditions*

The Jesus of Q is a teacher of wisdom but his is not a "worldly" wisdom. This wisdom is the knowledge of how to become a "son of the Father" (Q 6,35c-d). Jesus teaches "the way" that leads to becoming a "son of God". The Jesus of Q is the "Son of God". The baptismal account in Q 3,22 identifies Jesus as "son". Q 4,3 and 4,9

⁵⁸ TUCKETT, *Q*, 38, 219, 252-267.

affirm Jesus as the obedient “Son of God”. Here, again, there is no mention of his identity as the persecuted, suffering or coming “son of man”. Q 10,22, the “Johannine thunderbolt”, illustrates the high authority of Jesus’ “Sonship”. Jesus is the one whom “prophets and kings” have longed to see (Q 10,23b-24). Jesus is the Son of God who defies Satan through his obedience to the will and word of God. He enjoys a uniquely authoritative relationship with the Father and proscribes divorce with an argument based on the renewal of the original design of creation (Q 16,18; Mark 10,2-9). Jesus’ message of God’s providence as Father (ἄββᾶ) reverses expectations of “worldly wisdom”. This portrayal of Jesus in Q is complementary to an Adamic christology⁵⁹. According to Genesis 3,17-21, God told Adam:

Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;
thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.
By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Jesus’ promise of God’s providence in Q 12,22b-31 seems to contradict the biblical narrative: where Genesis explicitly describes God’s displeasure with Adam and his decision that humanity will labor for their food, Jesus’ message of divine providence reverses the labor, “sweat” and toil and issues in a new era of human existence, an “eschatological” reversal of the “fallen” condition of human life, a new “covenant” of divine providence: to live in the kingdom is to be “reborn” into a world where God took control of all of one’s affairs.

Jesus, like Adam, is the “Son” of the “Father”. Adamic Christology seems to have been “widely current” in the 40s and 50s C.E. Adam “plays a larger role in Paul’s theology than is usually realized” and is “often misunderstood”⁶⁰. Adam speculation also seems to have

⁵⁹ BULTMANN, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, 120-121 (*The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 115), argued that Q 11,49 documented a “myth of divine Wisdom” that paralleled a “myth of the Archetypal Man”. Bultmann was correct in noting these two streams of thought, but incorrect in using late sources to posit an early pan-Near Eastern background of a “Primal Man”/“gnostic redeemer” myth.

⁶⁰ DUNN, *Christology in the Making*, 98-128, esp. 101, 114.

played a formative role in the “cultic veneration of Christ” and may have allowed for the (legitimately) Jewish worship of someone other than God⁶¹. The identification of Jesus as Adam “probably predates Paul’s letters” since it is reflected in 1 Cor 15, Rom 5,12-19 and Phil 2,5-11⁶². In Philippians 2,5-11, a pre-Pauline Christian hymn, Jesus is described in a manner strikingly reminiscent of the creation of Adam in the image, likeness and “form of God” (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ) from Genesis 1,27⁶³. The phrase ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ in verse 6 echoes Genesis 1,26. Paul uses the term μορφή instead of εἰκὼν, but its meaning is essentially the same⁶⁴.

The Book of Dream Visions (*I En* 85-90) describes the appearance of an eschatological new Adam is described in terms of a renewal of humanity⁶⁵. A number of texts from Qumran indicate that the community anticipated the restoration of the “glory of

⁶¹ D. STEENBURG, “The Worship of Adam and Christ as the Image of God”, *JSNT* 39 (1990) 95-109, esp. 95, 100.

⁶² DUNN, *Christology in the Making*, 111, 114-119. R. MARTIN, *Carmen Christi*. Philippians 2:5-11 in *Recent Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI 1983) 108; W. MEEKS, *The First Urban Christians*. The Social World of the Apostle Paul (New Haven, PE 1983) 88; O. CULLMANN, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London 1963) 181; J.M. O’CONNOR, “Christological Anthropology in Phil. 2:6-11”, *RB* (1976) 25-50; W.D. DAVIES, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London 1948) 41; M.D. HOOKER, “Philippians 2:6-11”, *Jesus und Paulus*. Festschrift für W.G. Kümmel (eds. E.E. ELLIS – E. GRÄSSER) (Göttingen 1975) 160-164; C.K. BARRETT, *From First Adam to Last* (London 1962) 69-72; L.D. HURST, “Christ, Adam, and Preexistence Revisited”, *Where Christology Began*. Essays on Philippians 2 (eds. R.P. MARTIN – B.J. DODD) (Louisville, KY 1998) 84-95.

⁶³ A. CHESTER, *Messiah and Exaltation* (WUNT 207; Tübingen 2007) 392.

⁶⁴ MARTIN, *Carmen Christi*, 102-119; KIM, *Origin*, 200-204; CULLMANN, *Christology*, 176; DUNN, *Theology*, 284; BARRETT, *First Adam to Last*, 71.

⁶⁵ G.E. NICKELSBURG, *I Enoch* (Minneapolis, MN 2001) 406-407; P.A. TILLER, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of I Enoch* (Atlanta, GA 1993) 19-20, 365-392; M. BLACK, *The Book of Enoch* (SVTP 7; Leiden 1985) 20-21, 279-280; J.T. MILIK (ed.), *The Books of Enoch*. Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4 (Oxford, 1976) 45; G. S. OEGEMA, *The Anointed and his People*. Messianic Expectations from the Maccabees to Bar Kochba (JSPSup 27; Sheffield 1998) 56, 68; M. HENGEL, *Judaism and Hellenism*. Studies in their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period (Philadelphia, PA 1974) 344; A.I. BAUMGARTEN, *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era*. An Interpretation (JSJSup 55; Leiden 1997) 171.

Adam” (1QS 4,22-23; CD 3,20; 1QH 4,15), which is described as “a crown of glory with majestic raiment in eternal light” (1QS 4,7-8). 1QS clearly envisions an eschatological “renewal” (1QS 4,25), a profound transformation of the community, when “all the glory of Adam” will be “theirs”, i.e., when the original human design would be restored. The community saw itself as a “temple of Adam”, a phrase referring to both the community as an “eschatological sanctuary” as well as an “Adamic sanctuary of Eden restored”⁶⁶. Adamic speculation was clearly present in first-century Judaism.

There is not enough space here to analyze in detail this Jewish Christian trajectory through late antiquity. This would take us far afield from Q. It is sufficient to note that eschatological speculation often involved the attainment of an ideal humanity⁶⁷. Q is at home in eschatological Judaism, and a nexus between Jesus, Wisdom, and Adamic Christology (in Q) can help explain Jesus’ role as the one who renews the covenant between humanity (Adam) and God.

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The wisdom traditions in Q are both sapiential and eschatological/apocalyptic. In Q 12,22b-31, traditionally identified as a wisdom collection, Jesus encourages his followers and disciples not to be anxious about their food and clothing, but rather to “seek his kingdom”. Jesus’ assurance of God’s providence seems to fly in the face of “worldly” wisdom, where diligent labor is rewarded. Yet Jesus is also identified as the “Son of God” in Q, and this title in Q is not just a sapiential “son of God”, but “the Son” in an exclusive, absolute sense. This “Sonship” is more appropriately understood as a confluence of an Adamic identification with the

⁶⁶ M. WISE, “4QFlorilegium and the Temple of Adam,” *RevQ* 15 (1991) 103-32; G. BROOKE, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament* (Minneapolis, MN 2005) 243, 245; “Miqdash Adam, Eden and the Qumran Community”, *Gemeinde ohne Tempel-Community without Temple. Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kultes im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum* (eds. B. EGO et al.) (WUNT 118; Tübingen 1999) 285-230.

⁶⁷ A.R.G. DEASLEY, *The Shape of Qumran Theology* (Carlisle, PE 2000) 291.

Wisdom tradition, two distinctive paradigms which, along with Davidic messianism and “son of man” sayings, were subsequently taken up by the authors of Matthew and Luke.

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SUMMARY

In Q 12,22b-31, a kingdom-saying functions as the climax to a sapiential collection, but it is not self-evident that this message is sapiential. Q 12,31 uses traditional wisdom structures and forms to advance what appears to be an “eschatological” message. In this study, I re-examine the nature of the wisdom in Q 12,22b-31 and argue that the theme of God’s providence can be understood in relation to eschatological ideals of the restoration of creation and a “Son of God”/Adamic christology.

ANIMADVERSIONES

La christologie d'Ephésiens

En Éphésiens apparaissent deux expressions nouvelles qu'on ne trouve pas dans les autres lettres. Elles sont tellement nouvelles et plus riches de contenu qu'elles fournissent une preuve décisive qu'Ephésiens a été écrit après Colossiens. Elles sont aussi la preuve que la pensée théologique de Paul a évolué, mais aussi que sa compréhension de la valeur et de la signification de la résurrection du Christ s'est considérablement approfondie. Cette nouvelle compréhension est la suivante: comme Dieu nous a ressuscités ensemble avec le Christ ressuscité, il nous aussi amenés au ciel, avec le Christ, et nous fait participer à son existence céleste, là où le Christ siège à la droite de Dieu.

Cette image du Christ dans le ciel apparaît déjà plus ou moins dans la lettre aux Colossiens. Le contexte de ce passage montre qu'un nouvel horizon s'ouvre, qui amène un nouveau point de vue au sujet de l'introduction du Christ dans le ciel, comme le montre Col 3,1: "Si donc vous êtes ressuscités avec le Christ, cherchez les biens d'en haut, où le Christ est assis à la droite de Dieu". L'attention est ainsi attirée vers la Cité Supra-terrestre. Pourtant le fait que nous sommes chez nous là-bas n'apparaîtra clairement que quand le Christ apparaîtra à la fin des temps (Col 3,4).

I. Deux nouveautés dans la lettre aux Ephésiens

L'image du Christ dans le ciel élevé au-dessus de toute la création est dominante dans la lettre aux Ephésiens, où est soulignée l'importance du Christ dans l'agir salvifique de Dieu et sa valeur pour l'Eglise. Grâce à cette représentation Paul a compris l'objectif de l'action salvifique de Dieu: par l'introduction du Christ dans le ciel, Dieu a introduit aussi toute l'humanité dans son ciel; il voulait et pouvait ainsi lui faire partager concrètement et réellement la situation céleste du Christ, réalisant de ce fait la plénitude de l'ère du salut.

1. *Le Christ, à la tête de toute la création*

L'image que Paul donne du Christ en Ep comme chef de toute la création est en effet une expression nouvelle qui ne figure dans aucune autre de ses lettres. Déjà en Ep 1 Paul le dit en décrivant concrètement l'agir salvifique de Dieu. La première grâce de cette action salvifique est le pardon de nos péchés par la mort en croix du Christ ("en son sang": 1,7a).

Dieu nous a comblés davantage encore en faisant du Christ le chef de toute la création: "Il nous a nous fait connaître le mystère de sa volonté, le dessein bienveillant qu'Il a d'avance arrêté en Lui-même pour mener le temps du salut à son accomplissement: réunir l'univers entier sous un seul chef, le Christ" (Ep 1, 9-10).

Ce texte présente en premier lieu la façon dont Dieu veut mener son action salvifique à sa plénitude. Si l'objectif principal de Dieu a été de réaliser la plénitude du 'temps du salut' par l'élévation du Christ à la tête de toute la création, cela veut dire qu'il lui a confié une fonction spéciale, celle de réaliser la plénitude du temps du salut et ainsi de finaliser sa volonté salvifique. Enoncé autrement: cette investiture est le sommet de l'action salvifique de Dieu pour les hommes. Elle est sommet, littéralement, au sens où le Christ ne peut être plus élevé; et au figuré, car, par le Christ, Dieu veut et peut accomplir pleinement son œuvre de grâce dans les fidèles.

L'exaltation du Christ au-dessus de toute la création veut aussi dire qu'Il a été élevé au-dessus des forces cosmiques¹. Ceci éclaire le deuxième aspect de la même image. En effet, la manière dont cette exaltation au-dessus de toutes les forces cosmiques² est décrite, notamment l'énumération de toutes les forces hostiles à Dieu qui pourraient encore se dresser dans le présent et dans l'avenir, souligne la suprématie absolue du Christ sur toutes ces puissances. Aucun de ces êtres qui dominent le monde terrestre ne peut ni ne pourra menacer ni empêcher ou nuire à Dieu ou au Christ, ni aux grâces que Dieu a confiées au Christ³.

¹ En 1 Co 15,27 Paul a déjà écrit: "car le Christ a tout mis sous ses pieds". Il faut pourtant souligner que dans ce texte il est question de la fin des temps. Quand cette soumission aura eu lieu, le Christ se soumettra Lui-même et toute la création au Père. Cela veut dire: ce texte parle de la fin des temps. Dans Ep, il s'agit au contraire du début "du temps du salut". En 1Co la soumission du Cosmos est opérée par le Christ, et en Ep par le Père, immédiatement après la résurrection du Christ, et elle est considérée en outre comme le sommet de l'action salvifique de Dieu.

² Les forces cosmiques citées ici sont sans doute des personnifications du mal qui règne dans le monde. Cf. Ep 6,12: "Ce n'est pas à l'homme que nous sommes affrontés, mais aux autorités, aux pouvoirs, aux dominateurs de ce monde des ténèbres, aux esprits du mal qui sont dans les cieux". Paul ne semble pas parler ici des forces cosmiques d'Aristote, qui, par le canal de la Stoa, auraient pu influencer sa pensée.

³ Dans cette fonction du Christ on peut distinguer trois aspects: son universalité, parce qu'elle est destinée à tous les hommes; sa supratemporalité; et sa liberté face à n'importe quelles puissance et menace.

2. Dieu nous a placés, avec le Christ, dans le ciel.

La deuxième nouvelle affirmation remarquable se trouve en Ep 2,6: "Dieu nous a placés, ensemble avec le Christ, dans le ciel".

Une expression Col 3,3b est assez proche de celle d'Ep 1,22: "Avec le Christ votre vie est cachée en Dieu". Elle reflète aussi la profondeur de la contemplation paulinienne du mystère de Dieu. Pourtant ce texte ne va pas aussi loin que celui d'Ep. En effet, en Col, l'expérience de la proximité de Dieu est présentée comme une réalité future: "Quand le Christ, votre vie, apparaîtra, vous aussi vous apparaîtrez avec Lui dans la gloire de Dieu" (Col 3,4). En Ep, l'affirmation est plus forte et radicale. Le ciel, la vie dans la proximité de Dieu, est déjà maintenant la vraie réalité de notre existence: de la préposition grecque *σύν* (avec) nous pouvons conclure que cette existence céleste est une participation à l'existence céleste du Christ Lui-même.

Nous trouvons cette affirmation en Ep 1,22-23, versets très difficiles. A juste titre ils ont été appelés *crux interpretum*. Beaucoup d'études y ont été consacrées, mais seules les interprétations les plus courantes seront brièvement discutées ici.

II. L'approfondissement de la pensée de Paul en Ep 1,22-23

Si Ep 1,22-23a ("Il [Dieu] lui [le Christ] a soumis toute la création et l'a donné comme chef à l'Eglise, qui est son corps") ne fait pas difficulté, Ep 1,23b est en revanche interprété de différentes façons:

La plénitude de

Celui, qui accomplit tout en tous.
 Celui qui ... est accompli.
 le corps qui est totalement accompli.
 l'œuvre de salut de Dieu qui est accomplie en tous les fidèles.
 ce qui s'accomplit pleinement en tous les fidèles.
 (ce qui est amené à sa plénitude)

Comme ce verset a un contenu théologique important, il vaut la peine d'y consacrer le temps nécessaire pour en trouver le sens exact. Pour cela, il faut d'abord s'interroger sur la forme du participe grec; préciser ensuite la fonction grammaticale et le sens du mot *πλήρωμα* (plénitude), enfin, déterminer le sens de l'ensemble du verset⁴.

⁴ La première grande difficulté de ce texte, la signification de l'expression "le Christ, chef de toute la création" a déjà été expliquée en I,1.

1. *L'interprétation du participe πληρουμένου*

Telles sont les questions auxquelles il nous faut répondre: le participe a-t-il un sens actif ou passif? Et, à supposer qu'il soit passif, quel en est le sujet? Enfin, de quelle réalité spirituelle s'agit-il?

a. Le sens du participe

On a déjà beaucoup écrit sur ce problème purement linguistique. Ces derniers temps, la plupart des auteurs ont interprété ce participe comme un actif et traduisent ainsi: "Dieu a donné le Christ à l'Eglise, qui est le corps du Christ, qui est la plénitude de Celui qui accomplit tout en tous".

Bien que cette interprétation soit actuellement acceptée par la majorité, il existe plusieurs objections à son encontre.

Premièrement: à l'époque des premiers chrétiens ce participe était généralement considéré comme un passif. Comme ils étaient plus proches du langage biblique, on peut admettre qu'ils comprenaient mieux que nous l'emploi de cette forme.

Deuxièmement: d'après l'usage linguistique grec général il est presque impossible de donner à ce participe un sens actif⁵.

Troisièmement, et ce me semble être une preuve décisive: tous les verbes, de Ep 1,3 à 2,10 décrivent l'agir salvifique de Dieu le Père et sont tous à l'actif. Partout (ici aussi) c'est le Père qui dirige l'action salvifique. Si le participe πληρουμένου avait un sens actif, le Christ reprendrait le rôle actif de l'action salvifique de Dieu, et cela à l'improviste, sans introduction et sans autres considérations. Aucun écrivain digne de ce nom ne changerait ainsi le sujet dans un raisonnement de cette importance.

Ces trois objections rendent l'interprétation passive de ce participe la plus acceptable⁶.

⁵ Ce participe ne peut avoir un sens actif. Il ne peut être une forme médiale, pour la raison suivante: quand un verbe transitif est normalement employé à l'actif, il peut être utilisé, tout aussi normalement au passif, mais pas à la forme médiale. Le P. I. de la Potterie ("Le Christ plérôme de l'Eglise" [Ep 1,22-23], *Bib* 58 [1977] 500-524) a examiné l'utilisation du verbe πληροῦν dans les textes grecs profanes. La forme médiale de ce verbe ne figure en effet qu'à l'aoriste, où on peut constater une différence notable avec la forme passive, mais alors uniquement dans un contexte précis, notamment dans l'expression "charger des bateaux". Aussi bien dans la Septante que dans le NT on trouve très souvent la forme passive de πληροῦν, mais nulle part la médiale. Le participe présent passif figure deux fois dans le NT: dans Lc 2,40 et dans notre texte Ep 1,23. Si on prenait ce participe comme une forme médiale, ce serait un cas absolument isolé. En Ep on trouve quand même deux fois la forme médiale du verbe ποιεῖν. Ce verbe accepte plus facilement cette forme, pour le sens.

⁶ On pourrait éventuellement signaler la très forte forme active du verbe

b. Le sujet du participe

Deux exégètes français⁷ pensaient qu'il s'agit ici du Christ: "le corps du Christ est la plénitude de celui qui est accompli". Même si leur interprétation diffère, elle suscite la même objection. Dans toute la lettre il est uniquement question de la bénédiction dont Dieu nous comble. Ce que Dieu a accompli parfaitement au Christ depuis sa résurrection, et surtout depuis son placement au ciel, Il est en train de l'accomplir pleinement en nous. C'est la bénédiction dont Il nous comble à partir du Christ. C'est aussi la réalisation de la plénitude du temps du salut. Et c'est de cela dont il est question dans cette lettre.

Une autre interprétation⁸ faisait du "corps du Christ" le sujet du participe. Elle donne en outre au mot πλήρωμα une fonction autre que les interprétations précédentes: le participe est ici complément. Le Christ est vu ici comme "la plénitude du corps en train d'être accomplie". Mais le Christ ne peut être la plénitude d'un corps, d'une structure ou d'un cadre en train d'être rempli: il est la plénitude du contenu, de ce par quoi ce corps, cadre ou structure doit être rempli.

Il y a un bon nombre d'années j'avais pris comme sujet de πληρουμένου "l'agir salvifique de Dieu, qui est accompli dans tous les fidèles", et faisais de πλήρωμα une apposition au 'corps du Christ'. A cause de cela je ne trouvais aucune solution à ce problème. Un collègue attira mon attention sur le fait que le sujet d'un participe grec passif subit toujours l'action exprimée par le verbe: l'agir salvifique de Dieu ne pouvait ainsi être le sujet de ce participe, parce que l'agir salvifique de Dieu ne pouvait subir sa propre action. Je devais donc chercher une nouvelle interprétation. Il existe d'ailleurs une autre objection à l'interprétation de l'agir salvifique de Dieu comme sujet du participe. Car, en ces versets, Paul traite du don gratuit de la grâce, des actions salvifiques concrètes opérées en nous. Si l'on prend en compte cette dernière précision, l'agir salvifique de Dieu serait un concept beaucoup trop abstrait en un contexte relatant des faits concrets.

Je propose donc la traduction suivante: "Le Christ est la plénitude de ce qui s'accomplit pleinement dans tous les fidèles (ce qui est amené à

πληρώω dans 4,10, à la défense de l'interprétation active du participe dans 1,23b. Ce texte traite d'ailleurs plus ou moins du même événement de l'assomption du Christ au ciel: "Le Christ est monté au-dessus de tous les cieux pour tout remplir". La grande différence entre 1,19-23 et 4,10 se situe dans le fait que dans la description de l'agir salvifique, c'est Dieu le Père qui dirige la nouvelle création en 1,19-23; tandis qu'en 4,10, c'est clairement le Christ qui préside à la répartition des différentes fonctions pour la construction de l'Eglise.

⁷ P. BENOÎT, "Corps, tête et plérôme dans les épîtres de la captivité", *RB* 63 (1956) 5-44 et A. FEUILLET, "L'église plérôme du Christ d'après Eph 1,23, *NRT* 88 (1956) 449-472 et 593-610.

⁸ Celle de I. DE LA POTTERIE, "Le Christ plérôme de l'Eglise".

sa plénitude)”. Cela veut dire: que le πλήρωμα est apposé au Christ et non au corps; et que le participe est interprété comme un neutre passif. Il reste à donner la signification exacte de cette traduction et à la justifier. Deux questions surgissent à ce sujet: Quelle est la fonction grammaticale du mot πλήρωμα et quel en est le sens? Comment expliquer la nouvelle interprétation du participe et quel en est le sens?

2. La fonction grammaticale de πλήρωμα

La plupart des commentaires lisent le mot πλήρωμα comme apposé au “corps du Christ”. Cette interprétation va par contre à l’encontre des idées principales développées dans cette lettre.

Une objection de poids pour appeler le corps du Christ πλήρωμα “vient de ce que le Christ a réconcilié ce corps avec Dieu” (2,16) et que tous les hommes appartenant au corps restent l’objet de l’agir salvifique de Dieu (e.a. dans 2,5-6, encore plus dans 2,21-22). Cette remarque apparaît encore plus clairement dans 4,16: “Du Christ, la tête, le corps reçoit ... sa croissance” (où chacun qui appartient au corps, apporte sa contribution pour le construire). Il est donc difficile de considérer le corps comme la plénitude du Christ. Quatre versets plus haut, dans 4,11-12, Paul avait déjà précisé que le Christ avait désigné les différentes fonctions nécessaires pour construire son corps. Chaque fois nous sommes loin de la représentation d’une forme parfaite ou d’une “plénitude” de ce corps⁹. Toutes les citations mentionnées indiquent aussi bien l’importance de la personne du Christ, que la construction permanente de l’Eglise. En d’autres termes: toute la lettre aux Ephésiens traite de la valeur du Christ comme don de Dieu à l’Eglise, et pas de la valeur de l’Eglise pour sa propre existence. Cette considération semble décisive pour l’affirmation que le πλήρωμα ne renvoie pas à l’Eglise, mais bien au Christ.

Pour confirmer encore que le πλήρωμα ne renvoie pas au corps du Christ, on peut ajouter les considérations suivantes.

Si πλήρωμα est quand même en apposition à σώμα (du Christ), on donne une définition importante de l’Eglise. Mais rien n’est dit à ce sujet, ni dans les versets qui précèdent, ni dans ceux qui le suivent (2,1-10), et décrivent en détail le résultat que l’agir salvifique a obtenu en nous, à partir du Christ, en union avec lui. Il s’agit donc ici du contenu concret de l’agir salvifique en nous et non d’une considération abstraite au sujet du corps du Christ qu’est l’Eglise.

⁹ Il faut aussi signaler que, à la différence de 1, 22-23, où le Père dirige tout l’agir salvifique, ici c’est le Christ qui dirige. Ces textes pouvaient aussi confirmer l’interprétation d’I. de la Potterie (“Le Christ plérôme de l’Eglise”) de prendre le corps du Christ comme sujet du participe passif πληρουμένου.

L'objectif de Dieu avec l'investiture du Christ comme chef de toute la création était la réalisation de la plénitude du temps de salut. Le don du Christ à l'Eglise est donc le couronnement de tout son agir salvifique. Le lien de l'objectif de Dieu avec le don qu'Il fait à l'Eglise, donne une grande importance aussi bien à la fonction du Christ pour l'agir salvifique de Dieu qu'à sa valeur comme don à l'Eglise. Dieu a confié ses grâces au Christ, pour pouvoir les donner, à partir du Christ à l'Eglise. Celle-ci reçoit la grâce de Dieu à partir de quelqu'un avec qui elle est intrinsèquement liée. Le texte traite en premier lieu de l'importance du Christ comme don de Dieu à l'Eglise. Le vocable πλήρωμα renvoie à cette importance, et non à la situation de l'Eglise.

Bien qu'Ep fournisse suffisamment de preuves pour confirmer l'exactitude de la nouvelle interprétation présentée ici, une phrase de Col et son contexte la confirme aussi. Voici une traduction-paraphrase de cette phrase de Col 2,9: "En Lui (le Christ) habite la plénitude (le contenu total) de la réalité salvifique divine de telle façon que tout son corps y prend part". Le mot grec θεότης ne signifie pas la divinité, mais bien la réalité salvifique divine; on peut le déduire de la suite du texte qui explique la phrase citée: "En Lui (qui est le chef de tous les "principes et les pouvoirs") vous êtes remplis (de cela: c. à d: de toutes les grâces de Dieu, et non de la divinité)" (2,10)¹⁰. Dans ce texte apparaît clairement quel est le sens exact et le contenu du mot πλήρωμα, et que ce mot renvoie au Christ.

Pourtant il y a une objection sérieuse contre le fait d'apposer πλήρωμα au Christ et non au corps du Christ. En effet une apposition suit normalement immédiatement l'antécédent dans la phrase. Ici πλήρωμα suit immédiatement l'expression "le corps du Christ". La nouvelle interprétation va donc complètement à l'encontre de la lecture habituelle du texte, c. à d. à l'encontre de la lecture normale, linéaire et grammaticale. Pourtant celui qui lit le texte de cette manière a trop peu suivi son contenu extrêmement riche. Il ne s'est sans doute pas rendu compte que Paul donne ici le fond de sa pensée sur le sommet de l'agir salvifique de Dieu, notamment où Dieu a réalisé le rêve de son désir le plus profond, l'investiture du Christ comme chef de toute la création. C'est le geste par lequel il donne à l'Eglise toute la richesse de ses grâces et qu'il a commencé la nouvelle création du monde.

A plusieurs endroits de la lettre on trouve des affirmations si importantes et si chargées de sens théologique qu'il semble évident de considérer πλήρωμα comme apposé au Christ.

¹⁰ Dans les termes utilisés en Col. on trouve aussi la transition de l'image "chef de l'Eglise" vers celle de "chef de toute la création". Pourtant en Col la souveraineté du Christ est limitée à deux sortes de "puissances", alors que dans Eph elle est étendue par Dieu Lui-même à toute la création.

Dans le texte qui précède 1, 22-23 il y a trois citations qui le confirment.

En Ep 1,3 on lit: “Béni soit Dieu, le Père de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, qui nous a béni de toute la richesse en bénédictions spirituelles qu’il possède, au ciel, dans la personne de Jésus-Christ”.

Le Christ est présenté ici comme le possesseur et le porteur de tout le salut de Dieu. Le fait qu’un accent particulier est mis sur le pronom personnel “nous” indique: que ces grâces, — que Dieu a données en propriété au Christ et qui seront opérées en nous à partir de lui — que c’est à nous qu’elles sont vraiment destinées; et que la plénitude du temps de salut consistera en ce que nous serons réellement remplis de ces grâces à partir du Christ. Cela veut dire que le corps du Christ reste objet de l’agir salvifique de Dieu, et qu’il ne peut donc pas être la plénitude du salut qui s’opère maintenant en nous.

Nous arrivons à la même conclusion avec Ep 1,6: “pour que nous soyons pleins de louange pour la merveille de la grâce que Dieu nous a donnée en son (Fils) bien-aimé” (par laquelle Dieu nous a bénis).

Ici aussi nous trouvons une double dimension à la nouvelle existence du Christ. D’un côté, on peut conclure de cette affirmation que Dieu a donné toutes ses grâces au Christ. D’un autre, que Dieu nous a donné ces grâces, à partir du Christ et de notre union avec Lui.

Les versets 1,7-11 décrivent très concrètement quelles sont ces grâces. En premier lieu nous recevons le pardon de nos péchés, que le Christ nous a mérité par sa mort en croix (1,7). L’autre grâce, nous l’avons reçue d’une manière encore plus abondante (1,8), notamment par l’investiture du Christ comme chef de toute la création. Le verset 1,8 introduit d’ailleurs les versets suivants, 1,9-11: l’objectif principal de Dieu était la réalisation de la plénitude du temps de salut. C’est de là qu’a grandi le noyau (le “mystère”) de son désir (1,9): instituer le Christ comme chef de toute la création (1,10b). Cela signifie que l’investiture du Christ comme chef de toute la création est pour Dieu le moyen par excellence de réaliser la plénitude du temps de salut, c. à d. de faire participer tous les fidèles à la plénitude de ses grâces, la vie au ciel. C’est dans ce sens que le Christ est toute la richesse, la plénitude de la grâce de Dieu.

Le verset 1,11a montre mieux encore que πλήρωμα renvoie au Christ: “Dans ce Christ nous sommes en effet devenus aussi héritiers”. Le καί prend ici le sens de “en effet”. Ceci donne à ce verset une valeur importante pour notre interprétation. En effet, il souligne que notre principale bénédiction, devenir héritiers de Dieu, est le résultat principal qui découle de la fonction du Christ dans l’agir salvifique de Dieu, comme chef de toute la création. La bénédiction à partir de ce Christ est opérée précisément parce que le Christ est vraiment le porteur et le propriétaire de cette grâce (“en qui”). Autrement, comment Dieu aurait-il pu donner cette bénédiction à partir du Christ, si le Christ ne l’avait pas en lui-même et s’il

n'en était pas le propriétaire¹¹? Les vv. 7-11 confirment donc très fortement la thèse que le mot πλήρωμα en 1,23 renvoie au Christ et y est apposé. Trois fois, en effet, nous avons trouvé dans ce paragraphe des textes qui disent clairement que le Christ est porteur de toute la richesse de la grâce de Dieu.

La vraie solution se trouve en Ep 1,15-23, où figure ce mot.

Paul rappelle d'abord la grande valeur de l'héritage que Dieu veut nous donner: "savoir quelle est la grandeur de la vie que nous pouvons espérer, quelle est la richesse de la gloire de notre héritage" (1, 18bc). Ensuite il explique la manière dont Dieu veut réaliser cet héritage en nous: en opérant en nous le même résultat (κατά) qu'il a opéré dans le Christ par la résurrection et la session dans le ciel. C'est ainsi que Dieu réalise, à partir du Christ, la plénitude du temps du salut.

Cette réalisation comprend pour ainsi dire trois aspects.

En premier lieu Dieu ressuscite le Christ de la mort (1,20), action décrite en un demi verset (1,20a).

L'élévation du Christ au-dessus de toute la création est le deuxième aspect. Elle est décrite beaucoup plus longuement que la résurrection. Cela n'est pas étonnant, parce c'est cette élévation qui a réalisé l'essentiel du dessein de Dieu: la réalisation de la plénitude du temps de salut. En ce sens le Christ doit être lui-même la plénitude de tout ce que Dieu veut opérer dans les hommes. On pourrait encore y ajouter cette considération: la soumission de la création à ce Christ, qui a été élevé au-dessus de toute la création, signifie ipso facto que Dieu donnait ainsi la possibilité virtuelle de la remplir de toutes ses grâces. C'est sans doute pourquoi le texte consacre trois versets à cette élévation (1,20b-23). Il n'énumère pas seulement quatre forces cosmiques hostiles que Dieu soumet au Christ (1,22a)¹². Il renvoie aussi à toutes les autres puissances qui pourraient éventuellement exister dans le cosmos et que Dieu soumet aussi au Christ. En outre le texte y ajoute encore que cette élévation du Christ, et donc sa domination absolue sur le cosmos, resteront valables pour toutes les puissances existant aujourd'hui, mais aussi celles qui pourront surgir dans l'avenir (1,22c).

¹¹ On pourrait ajouter ici cette réflexion théologique: parce que Dieu a investi le Christ comme chef de toute la création, pour réaliser la plénitude du temps du salut (1,9-10); et parce qu'Il a donné ce Christ à l'Eglise, qui est son corps, 1,22-23, à savoir que Dieu a dû donner le Christ à l'Eglise comme porteur de toutes les grâces (πλήρωμα) par quoi il a réalisé, en effet, la plénitude du temps du salut.

¹² "Autorité, pouvoir, puissance, souveraineté" (traduction TOB). Que ce sont des ennemis de Dieu, nous l'apprenons dans le verset 6,12: "nous ne nous battons pas contre la chair et le sang, mais bien contre les autorités et les pouvoirs, contre les dominations de ce monde de ténèbres".

Avec le troisième aspect, l'agir salvifique de Dieu atteint son apogée. Après que la domination absolue du Christ a été assurée, Dieu donna en effet ce Christ à l'Eglise (1,22b). Le centre de gravité de l'agir salvifique de Dieu est exprimé par ce verbe 'donner'. Car, avec ce don Dieu donne la richesse de toutes ses grâces à l'Eglise, qui est le corps du Christ¹³. Paul parle ici en première instance du don de Dieu, de la richesse et de la valeur de sa grâce qu'il donne maintenant dans le Christ à son corps. Ce qui importe aux yeux de Paul, c'est le contenu du don et son destinataire. C'est aussi pourquoi il n'intercale aucune considération sur l'Eglise, le corps du Christ. Ce corps reste l'objet de l'agir salvifique de Dieu, qui est la raison pour laquelle Dieu a confié au Christ sa fonction capitale: être la plénitude de la grâce de Dieu, pour conduire l'Eglise jusqu'à sa plénitude, grâce à la toute-puissance de Dieu.

Notre argumentation pour considérer πλήρωμα comme apposé au Christ est confirmée par la manière dont la bénédiction de Dieu est représentée. Chaque fois le texte précise que nous recevons cette grâce à partir du Christ et de notre union avec Lui. Dans le premier alinéa c'est même dit cinq fois:

- 1,3: Dieu nous a bénis ... dans le Christ.
- 1,6: Il nous a bénis ... dans son Fils bien-aimé;
- 1,7: En Lui (le Christ) nous avons reçu notre salut;
- 1,11: En Lui nous sommes devenus ses héritiers;
- 1,13: En Lui vous avez reçu le sceau de l'Esprit.

Cela veut dire: toutes ces grâces, nous ne pourrions les recevoir "dans le Christ" (dans notre union avec Lui), si elles n'étaient pas établies en lui, si, en d'autres termes, il n'était pas le propriétaire et le porteur de toutes ces grâces. C'est précisément cette signification qui est exprimée dans le mot πλήρωμα.

¹³ Il y a une difficulté dans l'affirmation de 1,22: "Dieu a donné le Christ comme chef de tout à l'Eglise". A ce sujet on pose la question: "Comment Dieu peut-il donner le Christ à l'Eglise, alors que celle-ci ne naît que parce que des hommes s'unissent à Lui?". Je pense qu'il y a une erreur dans l'idée que l'Eglise naît parce que des hommes s'unissent à Lui. L'Eglise, comme communauté de Dieu, est née parce que le Christ a réconcilié par sa mort, dans son (propre) corps, les peuples, les juifs et les non-juifs avec Dieu (2,16). Son propre corps représente tous les peuples qu'Il a réunis dans son corps. Après, Dieu confie cette communauté ecclésiale au Christ, pour mener, à partir de Lui, à sa plénitude, dans ce même corps, le salut qu'Il a opéré dans le Christ. Ceci nous donne une interprétation mystique de l'Eglise, le corps du Christ. On n'y arrive pas avec une logique purement rationnelle, qui est apparemment présente dans cette objection.

3. *Le sens de πλήρωμα*

Par la fonction que Dieu a donnée au Christ par son investiture comme chef de toute la création (1,10), et par le fait que πλήρωμα est considéré comme apposé au Christ, la riche signification de ce mot a été donnée. Le Christ a reçu comme fonction d'être la plénitude de la grâce de Dieu pour l'Eglise, qui est son corps, pour amener cette grâce à sa plénitude dans tous les fidèles qui sont unis à Lui.

Cette signification est magnifiquement décrite dans deux expressions dans les environs immédiats des v.v. 1, 22-23. Le verset 1,18c exprimait cette signification comme suit: "la richesse qui fait la gloire de l'héritage de Dieu". Le v. 2,7 donne aussi bien le contenu que la valeur de πλήρωμα; mieux encore: "l'incomparable richesse de la grâce que Dieu, dans sa bonté, a opérée en nous dans notre union au Christ"¹⁴. Que ce πλήρωμα est un "don", nous le trouvons aussi bien dans le verbe de 1,23, que dans 2,8: "votre salut provient du don de Dieu".

Ailleurs en Ep nous trouvons des expressions ayant la même signification. Le v. 3,8 la formule ainsi: "A moi (Paul), le moindre de tous les saints, la grâce a été donnée d'annoncer l'impénétrable richesse du Christ"¹⁵. En fait, par cette formule Paul décrit le vrai sujet de cette lettre, ce au sujet duquel il veut surtout écrire, notamment sur l'incroyable valeur du Christ que Dieu a donné à nous et à toute l'Eglise. Il n'est pas de suite clair que dans cette valeur est incluse notre existence céleste, notre participation à la vie céleste du Christ, la nouvelle réalité de notre existence, qui est si fortement exprimée dans le verset 2,6: "dans notre union au Christ Dieu nous a placés au ciel". Nous reviendrons sur l'expression de 2,6 plus loin. Nous retrouvons en 4,13 le même sens de richesse du Christ, mais dans une formulation plus abstraite: "Que nous parvenions tous à la mesure de la stature du plèroma du Christ".

La phrase qui clôtüre la partie dite "dogmatique" de la lettre confirme très fort, à sa manière la nouvelle interprétation de πλήρωμα et aussi celle de πληρουμένου. "Puisse-*vous* connaître l'amour du Christ qui surpasse toute connaissance (de toutes ses dimensions), pour que vous soyez rem-

¹⁴ La question: "quelle valeur le Christ a-t-Il pour moi" est trop subjective. La valeur du Christ ne dépend pas de ce que moi je vois en Lui. La vraie question au sujet de la valeur du Christ est: "quelle valeur Dieu a-t-Il donné au Christ pour l'Eglise?" Cette distinction est très importante. Car comprendre cela, la vraie connaissance du Christ, est la base et le fondement de toute vocation chrétienne et religieuse.

¹⁵ Dans cette formulation résonne une tonalité de joie, dont d'ailleurs toute la lettre est pénétrée. Cette tonalité forme une troisième différence avec la lettre aux Colossiens, où le ton est plutôt celui du souci pour la fidélité des Colossiens au Christ.

plis de toute la plénitude de Dieu” (3,19). Par cette plénitude Paul veut dire aussi tout le contenu des bénédictions et des grâces de Dieu, toute la réalité que Dieu opère en nous à partir du Christ. Un ancien manuscrit du Vatican (B33) ajoutait à ce texte un complément intéressant: “en vous”, où il est évident qu’il renvoie à l’agir salvifique de Dieu dans les fidèles.

Par l’affirmation du sens spirituel du participe, qui suit, on rediscutera encore le sens de πλήρωμα.

4. *Le sens de πληρουμένου*

Voici une paraphrase descriptive de Ep 1,22-23: “(Dieu a donné le Christ à l’Eglise, qui est le corps du Christ, comme chef de toute la création, comme le contenu total) de ce qui est amené maintenant à sa plénitude en tous les fidèles”¹⁶.

Les arguments prouvant que πλήρωμα doit être lu comme apposé au Christ ne se trouvent pas seulement dans les versets précédant 1,22-23, mais aussi et surtout en 2,1-10.

Les vv. 19-23 traitent exclusivement de l’action de la toute-puissance de l’agir salvifique de Dieu qui est au travail en nous aussi puissamment que dans le Christ (1,19). Cette idée est développée non seulement dans l’alinéa 1,19-23 mais encore beaucoup plus longuement dans le suivant 2,1-10. Dans 1,19-23 nous trouvons une peinture, de style plus ou moins heurté, de l’action de Dieu dans le Christ. Dieu réalisait en effet son désir le plus profond: la plénitude du temps de salut par la nomination du Christ comme chef de toute la création. Le don de ce Christ à l’Eglise devenait alors le sommet de son agir salvifique, parce que cela Lui permettait d’appliquer à l’Eglise, à partir du Christ, la totalité de son salut et de ses grâces. Aucune force ni aucune puissance dans le cosmos, dans le présent, ni dans l’avenir, ne peut être un obstacle, ni nuire à Dieu, ni au Christ. Comment Dieu accomplit, à partir du Christ et de notre union à Lui, son agir salvifique en nous, et en quoi consiste le résultat de cet agir, cela est décrit, dans un style également un peu heurté, dans l’unité suivante: “... Il nous a donné la vie avec le Christ — c’est par son agir salvifique que vous êtes sauvés — avec Jésus-Christ et dans notre union avec Lui le Père nous a ressuscités et fait asseoir dans les cieux” (2,5-6).

Comme nous l’avons dit au début de cet article, cette dernière formulation est la deuxième affirmation forte de la lettre. On ne peut formuler

¹⁶ “Si l’on demande quelle sorte de génitif est πληρουμένου, on parlera d’un génitif de sujet, ou, si l’on préfère, du génitif de la chose qui arrive en l’état nommé par le vocable πλήρωμα. Cf R. HERMANS – L. GEYSLS, “Efesiërs 1.23: Het pleroma van Gods heilswerk”, *Bijdragen* 28 (1967) 288. Comme complément on prend ici: “par la toute-puissance de l’agir salvifique de Dieu”. Pour les raisons, voir plus loin.

plus clairement la nouvelle existence que Dieu Lui-même a opérée en nous, à partir du Christ.

Ces versets 2,5-6 sont particulièrement importants comme preuve de la nouvelle interprétation de 1,23. Ils décrivent, en effet, très concrètement ce que 1,19 annonçait: l'intensité de l'action de Dieu en nous. Ep 2,7 confirme aussi clairement l'unité des deux alinéas, 1,15-23 et 2,1-10, qui forment un tout, comme un diptyque, où les versets 1,19 et 2,7 sont les charnières qui relient les deux volets¹⁷.

Ep 1,23 n'exprime pas seulement l'intuition mystique de Paul la plus profonde, il indique aussi avec grande précision l'unité qui existe entre l'agir de Dieu et le résultat qu'il obtient. En d'autres termes, ce participe exprime concrètement ce qui est amené à sa plénitude en nous par la puissance de Dieu. Aussi bien en πλήρωμα qu'en πληρουμένου, qui qualifie πλήρωμα, on trouve les mots 'grâce et bénédiction', la réalité que la force de Dieu opère en nous: "C'est par sa grâce que vous êtes sauvés" (2,5 et 2,8). C'est aussi la nouvelle création qui est accomplie en nous: "Nous sommes en effet l'œuvre de Dieu, recréés comme nous le sommes en Jésus-Christ" (2,10).

Le participe annonce encore plus concrètement la conséquence effective de cette réalité en 2,18-19: "Et c'est par le Christ que les uns et les autres (Juifs et Païens), dans un seul Esprit, nous avons accès auprès du Père. Ainsi vous n'êtes plus des étrangers, ni des gens sans citoyenneté; vous êtes devenus des concitoyens des saints, vous êtes de la famille de Dieu". Notre recréation, notre nouvelle réalité, notre nouvelle existence, est située dans le fait que "nous avons été adoptés dans la famille de Dieu". Voilà la signification pleine et concrète de ce qui a été opéré en nous et qui est indiqué par le participe. Le ciel est dès maintenant la vraie réalité de notre existence, ce qui nous permet de vivre tout près de Dieu. Cela semble incroyable. En fait c'est la vision que Paul a du résultat du salut que Dieu a opéré dans le Christ en Le mettant à sa droite dans le ciel.

On peut aussi indiquer la dimension théologique de cette vision: par le don à l'Eglise de la personne du Christ que Dieu a placé dans le ciel après sa résurrection, Il a aussi ipso facto fait participer celle-ci à la situation céleste du Christ.

La forme présente du participe passif rend très concrètement l'achèvement de la situation céleste que Dieu fournit à l'Eglise, à partir du Christ, de même que le processus de croissance du salut vers son achè-

¹⁷ Que les versets de 1,15 à 2,10 doivent être considérés comme un tout ressort de l'inclusion formée par la mention de la force de Dieu en 1,19 et celle de la grâce de Dieu en 2,7, qui devient encore plus frappante par le renvoi à la compréhension de l'agir de la force de Dieu en nous. C'est pourquoi il est vraiment regrettable d'établir une cassure entre ces deux alinéas en faisant commencer un nouveau chapitre juste au milieu du développement de la pensée principale, comme si ces textes n'étaient pas intrinsèquement liés.

vement. Le sens de ce participe a été traduit par une expression assez vague; “de ce qui est accompli”. Ce “ce” exprime la réalité que l’agir salvifique de Dieu opère en nous, et à partir de 2,6 cette réalité reçoit un contenu précis et est exprimée de différentes façons: “Le Christ est la plénitude, le contenu total de la grâce qui est amenée à sa plénitude en nous”. Ou, mieux encore, d’après 2,6: “Le Christ est toute la richesse de l’existence céleste, qui est accomplie totalement dans tous les fidèles”. Dans une traduction libre, toute la phrase pourrait être rendue comme suit: “Dieu a donné le Christ à l’Eglise, qui est son corps, pour qu’Il soit pour tous les fidèles la richesse totale de la vie au ciel, dont ils sont en train maintenant d’être totalement remplis”. Ces traductions sont proches des images d’Ep 4,16: “A partir du Christ, la tête, tout le corps reçoit ... sa croissance ... en vue de sa propre construction”.

5. Les deux précisions τὰ πάντα et ἐν πᾶσιν

Aussi bien en 1,18 qu’en 1,19 il y a un accent très fort sur les personnes à qui l’héritage de Dieu est destiné (“pour les saints” dans 1,18) et en qui (“en nous”; “les croyants”, 1,19) Dieu est agissant avec sa toute-puissance. Dans l’alinéa suivant (2,1-10) un accent aussi fort est mis sur la répétition continuelle des pronoms personnels “vous” et “nous”, sur ceux donc qui sont l’objet de l’agir aimant de Dieu. D’ailleurs, comme expliqué plus haut, cet alinéa forme un diptyque en parallèle avec 1,15-23. En effet, l’emploi de ces deux pronoms personnels indique le caractère très personnel et concret de l’agir salvifique de Dieu. C’est pourquoi on fait bien de considérer l’expression ἐν πᾶσιν de 1,23 comme un renvoi aux personnes mentionnées plus haut, les saints et les croyants, et à ceux à qui les pronoms personnels font allusion. C’est pourquoi la meilleure traduction de cette expression est “dans tous les croyants”.

L’autre expression τὰ πάντα, accusatif de relation — accusatif souvent attaché à des verbes au passif — indique la plénitude de la bénédiction qui s’accomplit dans les fidèles. Dans l’interprétation de 1,23 défendue ici les deux compléments ne sont donc pas considérés comme une locution adverbiale unique. Le τὰ πάντα exprime aussi bien l’aspect qualitatif que l’aspect quantitatif du résultat de l’agir salvifique de Dieu. En conséquence il est traduit par “à tous égards”, ou “pleinement”.

*

* *

Ep 1,22b-23 est vraiment difficile à comprendre. Ce passage exprime en effet d’une façon très compacte la nouvelle et profonde interprétation théologique de Paul qui décrit la valeur du dernier grand événement salvifique, l’ascension du Christ au ciel. Il n’est pas étonnant qu’on ait déjà tellement écrit sur ces versets.

Les difficultés viennent du manque de clarté du sens des mots κεφαλή (chef/tête), πλήρωμα et πληρουμένου. Elles proviennent aussi en grande partie du fait que nous avons à faire ici à une vue mystique particulièrement profonde de Paul.

Au cours de ces lignes nous avons essayé d'éclairer le sens de ces versets à partir des idées développées dans les deux premiers chapitres de la lettre, mais surtout à partir de leur cohérence interne.

Le sens de 'chef de toute la création' se trouve surtout dans 1,10. Cela exprime la fonction du Christ dans la réalisation de l'agir salvifique de Dieu: faire participer tous les croyants à son existence céleste. La description de l'élévation du Christ en 1,21-22 donne aussi cette image de la domination absolue du Christ sur toutes les puissances hostiles à Dieu dans le cosmos, maintenant et dans l'avenir. Dieu s'est acquis ainsi une liberté totale et une sécurité absolue pour son agir salvifique.

La deuxième grande difficulté est le mot πλήρωμα. Il faut le lire comme apposé au Christ. La lettre traite en effet de la bénédiction que Dieu nous donne à partir du Christ comme chef de toute la création. Dieu a donné le Christ à l'Eglise, comme la plénitude de toutes les grâces dont nous serons comblés. Ceci est surtout souligné dans 1,3 et 1,11a. Tout l'alinéa 1,15-23 décrit l'action puissante de Dieu dans le Christ. Mais ici nous soulignons aussi qu'elle est à l'œuvre en nous avec la même puissance et avec le même résultat (κατά 1,19c) que dans le Christ. Les versets 2,5-6 décrivent le contenu concret de cette bénédiction et comment elle opère en nous à partir de notre union avec le Christ. Le sens de πλήρωμα est éclairé par tous ces versets et est encore confirmé en d'autres, comme par exemple en 3,8 et 4,13c. En Col 2,9 nous trouvons aussi une affirmation dont le sens est très proche de celui d'Ep 1, 23. Πλήρωμα donne donc la valeur du Christ pour l'Eglise, qui est son corps. Il est la plénitude de sa vie céleste.

L'interprétation du participe grec πληρουμένου était la tâche la plus difficile. À l'encontre de la plupart des interprétations, il est lu ici comme un passif et considéré comme un neutre. Le contenu de ce qui est décrit par ce participe est aussi présent dans les versets 2,5-6. Il est la bénédiction concrète amenée par Dieu à sa plénitude en tous les croyants.

SUMMARY

This essay proposes to read Eph 1,23, as follows: the πλήρωμα is Christ, the fullness of all God's graces. And the participle πληρουμένου is a neuter passive, whose content is the actual blessing brought by God to its fullness in all the believers. Eph 1,23 can then be translated like this: "Christ is the fullness of what is fully accomplished in all the faithful".

The Deceptive Pen of Scribes: Judean Reworking of the Bethel Tradition as a Program for Assuming Israelite Identity

As P. R. Davies asks, “Why did Judeans call themselves ‘Israel’?”¹ Among biblical scholars, there has been much discussion around this intriguing question². Insofar as “Israel” was for centuries associated with the Northern Kingdom, with which Judah had fluctuating political relations, Judah’s calling themselves “Israel” is not necessarily a matter of course. In a recently published article in this journal, N. Na’aman proposes a fresh argument. “The adaptation of the Israelite identity by the Judahite scribes and elite was motivated by the desire to take over the highly prestigious vacant heritage of the Northern Kingdom”, he claims, “just as Assyria had sought to take possession of the highly prestigious heritage of ancient Mesopotamia”³.

The significance of Na’aman’s proposal must be understood in the context of other solutions to the problem of accounting for Judah’s assumption of Israelite identity. The first alternative solution is the now popular notion of the alleged migration of northern refugees in the wake of the Assyrian crisis, refugees who supposedly brought their endangered traditions to the south. It has been assumed that the pan-Israelite identity arose as a result of Judean officials’ attempts to control the amalgamated population that resulted from the alleged migration⁴. Though attractive in many regards, this first solution is undermined by the lack of evidence on the migration and is

¹ P.R. DAVIES, *The Origins of Biblical Israel* (LHBOTS 485; New York 2007) 1.

² See P.R. DAVIES, *In Search of “Ancient Israel”* (JSOTSup 148; Sheffield 1992) for the groundbreaking work on this issue. For a history of research, see idem, *Origins*, 5-24.

³ N. NA’AMAN, “The Israelite-Judahite Struggle for the Patrimony of Ancient Israel”, *Bib* 91 (2010) 17.

⁴ E.g., I. FINKELSTEIN – N.A. SILBERMAN, “Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology”, *JSOT* 30 (2006) 259-285; ID., *The Bible Unearthed*. Archaeology’s New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts (New York 2001); and ID., *David and Solomon: In Search of the Bible’s Sacred Kings and the Roots of the Western Tradition* (New York 2006). For a notable variation, though not explicitly based on the immigration of the refugees, see R.G. KRATZ, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (London 2005) 181-182, 209, 218-219, 304-306, 309-319; ID., “Israel als Staat und als Volk”, *ZTK* 97 (2000) 1-17; ID., “Israel in the Book of Isaiah”, *JSOT* 31 (2006) 103-128.

severely criticized by Na'aman in another article⁵. The second proposed solution is Davies's recent argument for the fifth-century origins of Judean assumption of Israelite identity and is based largely on the intermediary role that the Benjaminites played as a result of their unique dual membership in Israel and Judah⁶. When Judeans returned to Jerusalem, they had to negotiate with the already established "memory"⁷ of the Benjaminites, who had taken control of the land after the fall of Jerusalem⁸. Na'aman rejects not only this role for the Benjaminites⁹ but also the late origin of Judean assumption of Israelite identity¹⁰.

Dissatisfied with existing solutions, Na'aman took up Machinist's classic argument that "literature is essentially a political act, created to explain and justify major political and cultural shifts" and freshly applies it to Josiah's program of northern expansion — Machinist, on the other hand, applied it to the time of David and Solomon¹¹. That is, when Assyria managed to overcome Babylonia through military prowess, it employed a number of typical strategies for legitimating conquest. Assyrians moved the statue of Marduk to Ashur and celebrated a major religious festival in Ashur, actions that were both conscious attempts to shift the Mesopotamian cultural center to Assyria. They also transported Babylon's large literary collection to

⁵ N. NA'AMAN, "When and How Did Jerusalem Become a Great City? The Rise of Jerusalem as Judah's Premier City in the Eighth-Seventh Centuries B.C.E.," *BASOR* 347 (2007) 21-56. For similar critiques, see DAVIES, *Origins*, 20-22; and E.A. KNAUF, "Bethel: The Israelite Impact on Judean Language and Literature", *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (eds. O. LIPSCHITS – M. OEMING) (Winona Lake, IN 2006) 293-295.

⁶ Cf. Y. LEVIN, "Joseph, Judah and the 'Benjamin Conundrum'", *ZAW* 116 (2004) 223-41.

⁷ One of the main methods on which Davies relies is the idea of "cultural memory". See DAVIES, *Origins*, 30-35. See also M. SMITH, *The Memoirs of God. History, Memory, and the Experience of the Divine in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis, MN 2004).

⁸ DAVIES, *Origins*, 173. Davies's view on the role of Bethel in the neo-Babylonian and Persian periods is based on his critical reading of Jeremiah 40-41 and recent scholarship that highlights the renewed significance of this ancient shrine after the fall of Jerusalem. For a broader discussion on the issue, see O. LIPSCHITS – J. BLENKINSOPP (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period* (Winona Lake, IN 2003); and O. LIPSCHITS – M. OEMING (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (Winona Lake, IN 2006).

⁹ For his critique of the Benjamin hypothesis, see N. NA'AMAN, "Saul, Benjamin and the Emergence of 'Biblical Israel'", *ZAW* 121 (2009) 211-224, 335-349; Id., "Patrimony", 4-5.

¹⁰ NA'AMAN, "Patrimony", 5-6.

¹¹ P. MACHINIST, "Literature as Politics: The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic and the Bible", *CBQ* 38 (1976) 455-482. The quotation is from 478.

Assyria, created original propagandist work, and reworked the foundational epic to serve Assyrian interests¹².

This analogous sequence of events indeed makes Josiah's reform look strikingly similar to that of Assyria. The Deuteronomist's (Dtr) presentation in 2 Kgs 23 affirms Josiah's claim on Northern territories and even extended it to one of the most important sanctuaries of the North, namely Bethel (2 Kgs 23,15-20)¹³. Josiah then celebrates the major Israelite religious festival, Passover, in Jerusalem (2 Kgs 23,21-23). Dtr also claims, based on a treaty motif¹⁴, that the fall of Samaria is a manifestation of divine abandonment of northern Israelite monarchy (2 Kgs 17,7-24) and promotes the idea of a divine choice of Judah, perhaps as an ideal covenant partner with YHWH, through Josiah's faithfulness (2 Kgs 23,21-25).

Na'aman carries his argument only this far, without pushing further to the last, and arguably most important, point of the analogy, in which the conquering group rewrites the other's tradition. To be sure, the above-established analogy — of Assyria and Babylon to Judah and Israel — is significant enough¹⁵. Yet one can make a convincing case that Judean scribes also made analogous attempts to rework northern tradition as part of their program to assume the newly vacant Israelite identity when Judeans were negotiating with new reality after the sudden fall of the Northern Kingdom. The sole purpose of this article is, therefore, to demonstrate, through one telling example, Judean scribes' reworking of the northern tradition as part of Judean identity reformulation. By considering the Jacob story, particularly the Bethel account (Gen 28,10-22), I would like to demonstrate that the skillful — or deceptive from a Northern point of view — pen of the Judean scribes reworked this northern tradition and thus attempted to rewrite the past once and for all.

¹² See NA'AMAN, "Patrimony", 9-12 for a more detailed discussion.

¹³ Whether there is a *fundamentum in re* to this literary claim is another question, of course. I do not share the confidence in the historicity of Josiah's northern campaign that Na'aman displays in "Patrimony", 18-21. My reservation about the historicity does not, however, diminish the significance of this literary presentation of Josiah's campaign. Important for our purposes is the sheer fact that such literary claims have been made, assuming that they exhibit the motivation of the scribes intended to make certain points by doing so.

¹⁴ The treaty motif constitutes the heart of Deuteronomy. What makes Israel the people of YHWH is fidelity to the mutual covenant, the breach of which will only forfeit Israelhood. Note that the Assyrian Tukulti-Ninurta epic that frequently relies on a treaty motif as well to highlight the divine abandonment of the Babylonian king. MACHINIST, "Literature", 458, 464.

¹⁵ In "Patrimony", Na'aman further argues that Josiah may have plundered the scrolls from Bethel (20). Although attractive, this must remain a conjecture, due to a lack of evidence.

I. Literary History of the Bethel Account

Insofar as Bethel functioned as a national sanctuary for northern Israel (1 Kgs 12,26-29; Amos 7,13), the Bethel tradition is instrumental for discussing Israelite identity. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that Beth-El presumably was conceived as the navel of the universe, a hill that connected heaven and earth, which was a type of notion that often accompanied central religious shrines in ancient societies¹⁶. Therefore, investigating a Judean re-working of the Bethel tradition provides a unique opportunity to glimpse the Judeans' struggle to negotiate their identity in relation to this northern Israelite religious center, especially after the fall of Samaria.

A brief overview of the literary history of the Bethel account is in order. Traditionally, the Bethel account in Genesis 28,10-22 functioned as one of the model texts for source criticism¹⁷. Recently, however, redaction models — more accurate alternatives in accounting for the growth of this particular text — have begun to dominate¹⁸. That is, now the Bethel account is

¹⁶ See M. ELIADE, *The Sacred and the Profane*. The Nature of Religion (New York 1959) 37-42; J.D. LEVENSON, "The Temple and the World", *JR* 64 (1984) 275-298.

¹⁷ J. WELLHAUSEN, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs* (Berlin 1885) 30. The reason why the Bethel account has been taken as a model example of source criticism is two-fold. First, it has been claimed that the divine-name principle applies particularly well to this text. Second, when sources are divided so, the ensuing documents betray two conflicting viewpoints, which when read separately flow more smoothly. The common source delineation among source critics is as follows:

Wellhausen		Noth	Friedman
10-12.17-18.20.21a.22	<i>E</i>	11aβb.12.17.18. 20.21*.22	11b.12; 17.18.20-22
13-16*.19a	<i>J</i>	10.11aa.13-16.19	10.11a.13-16.19
14bβ.19b.21b	<i>R</i> ^{JE}	19b?21b?	

WELLHAUSEN, *Die Composition*, 30-31; R.E. FRIEDMAN, *The Bible with Sources Revealed*. A New View into the Five Books of Moses (San Francisco, CA 2003) 77. Noth's source division follows A.F. CAMPBELL – M.A. O'BRIEN (eds.), *Sources of the Pentateuch*. Texts, Introductions, Annotations (Minneapolis, MN 1993) 112, 170, 261-262. For a slightly different reconstruction of Noth's Source division, see Anderson's supplement to M. NOTH, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1972) 264.

¹⁸ There are two frequently raised critiques against the source-critical reading of the Bethel account. First, the division is almost entirely rooted in the divine-name principle, the use of which is not particularly convincing in this text. For a critique of the divine-name principle, see E. BLUM, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984)

understood generally as a product of successive revisions rather than collations of parallel sources¹⁹.

The present form of the Bethel account reveals diverging foci — “fractures”, in Carr’s terms — that provide clues for literary history beyond the final form of the text. Above all, one may sense an etiological nature that promotes the sanctity of an ancient shrine at Bethel particularly in a distinct heavenly vision in this account. At another level, the discovery of the place is subsumed into the legend of the heroic figure Jacob, who later receives the name “Israel” (Gen 32,29; 35,10). The incident at Bethel now exists only as part of a legend that celebrates the rise of this hero. On yet another level, however, this focus on Jacob is somewhat diluted by the divine

19-25; 471-477. The use of YHWH in the supposed E stratum in v. 21b, for instance, presents such source-critical havoc that most critics have to rely on R^{JE} (or the *Jehovist* of Graf and Wellhausen), the problem of which became more evident after Baden’s critique of it. See J.S. BADEN, *J, E, and the Redaction of the Pentateuch* (FAT 68; Tübingen 2009). Second, the resulting Yahwistic strand does not form a complete, parallel Bethel account to E; it rather represents a universal theme of promise that occurs in several other places of Genesis, which undermines one of the founding principles of the Documentary Hypothesis—the existence of continuous, parallel sources. See D.M. CARR, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis: Historical and Literary Approaches* (Louisville, KY 1996) 207-208; M. ROSE, “Genèse 28,10-22: l’exégèse doit muer en herméneutique théologique”, *Jacob: Commentaire à plusieurs voix de Ein mehrstimmiger Kommentar zu A Plural Commentary of Gen 25-36*. Mélanges offerts à Albert de Pury (eds. J.-A. MACCHI – T. RÖMER) (Le monde de la Bible 44; Genève 2001) 82. For a defense of the traditional source model in the Bethel account, see S.E. MCEVENUE, “A Return to Sources in Genesis 28,10-22?”, *ZAW* 106 (1994) 375-389; and D.J. WYNN-WILLIAMS, *The State of the Pentateuch*. A Comparison of the Approaches of M. Noth and E. Blum (BZAW 249; Berlin 1997) 117-124. Both of them, however, focus on criticizing flaws in Blum’s critique of Wellhausen, without attempting to defend Wellhausen from the criticism laid against the Documentary Hypothesis.

¹⁹ See, e.g., O.H. STECK, *Old Testament Exegesis*. A Guide to the Methodology (Atlanta, GA 1998) 185. For a general critique of the source theory, see also Carr, *Fractures*, 143-151; KRATZ, *Composition*, 249-50; and K. SCHMID, *Genesis and the Moses Story*. Israel’s Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible (Siphrut 3; Winona Lake, IN 2010) 336-341.

NB: Recently, even source critics tend to espouse the revisional nature of the Bethel account. The Yahwistic promise (vv. 13-16) is considered an insertion into the original Elohist account. See, e.g., Z. WEISMAN, *From Jacob to Israel* (Jerusalem 1986); idem, “The Interrelationship between J and E in Jacob’s Narrative: Theological Criteria”, *ZAW* 104 (1992) 177-197; and T.L. YOREH, *The First Book of God* (BZAW 402; Berlin 2010).

promise that reminds the reader of another significant figure, Abraham.

In breaking down these fractures, I will mainly follow Blum’s recently revised model of redaction history, which will set the stage for the real agenda of the present contribution²⁰. Recently, Blum revisited Gen 28,10-22, which was a foundational text for his earlier work²¹, and significantly modified his detailed reconstruction²² into a modest, three-level model²³.

1984 <i>Die Komposition</i>		2000 “Noch einmal”	
1 Kultgrundungssage	11-13aa.16-19a	11-13a*. 15*.16-22	1 Jakoberzählung
2 Kompositionsschicht	19b.20. 21a.22		
3 Vätergeschichte 1	13aß-14a		
4 Haran-Bearbeitung	10		
5 Vätergeschichte 2	14b	13b-14	2 Vätergeschichte
6 D-Bearbeitung	15, 21b	10.15*.21b?	3 Bearbeitung

²⁰ For a more thorough redaction-historical reconstruction, K.P. HONG, “Towards the Hermeneutics of Responsibility: A Linguistic, Literary, and Historical Reading of Genesis 28:10-22” (Claremont Graduate University 2011) 295-342.

²¹ BLUM, *Vätergeschichte*, 7-65. The entire work was based on the redaction-critical framework established by the initial study of the Bethel tradition (i.e., Gen 28,10-22; 35,1-7). The founding observation was his isolation of the self-contained Bethel episode in vv. 11-13aa.16-19a, identified by means of extracting all the secondary additions (vv. 10. 13aß.14.15.19b.20-22). Blum’s main criterion of identifying later elements was a redaction-critical criterion of “narrative horizon”. For a critique of this as an “outrageous principle”, see MCEVENUE, “Return to Sources”, 377 n. 6.

²² Blum stratified the promise (28,13aß-15) into four redactional stages. Together with two other stages, then, Blum established an exhaustive six-level redaction model. BLUM, *Vätergeschichte*, 7-35, 88-98, 290-293. Cf. R. RENDTORFF, “Jakob in Bethel: Beobachtungen zum Aufbau und zur Quellenfrage in Gen 28:10-22”, *ZAW* 94 (1982) 511-523; ID., *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (JSOTSup 89; Sheffield 1990) 74-84; and CARR, *Fractures*, 181-182, 205-208, 258-259, 263-264. Cf. C. WESTERMANN, *The Promises to the Fathers*. Studies on the Patriarchal Narratives (Philadelphia, PE 1979).

²³ E. BLUM, “Noch einmal: Jakobs Traum in Bethel — Genesis 28,10-22”, *Rethinking the Foundations* (eds. S.L. MCKENZIE – T. RÖMER) (Berlin 2000) 33-54. Reprinted: ID., *Textgestalt und Komposition*. Exegetische Beiträge zu Tora und Vordere Propheten (FAT 69; Tübingen 2010) 21-41. See D.M. CARR, “Genesis 28,10-22 and Transmission-Historical Method: A Reply to John Van Seters”, *ZAW* 111 (1999) 399-403 for a similar modification.

What remains firm despite this modification²⁴ is his basic scheme in which the northern Israelite Jacob tradition has been re-appropriated by the Judeans after the fall of northern Israel (722 B.C.E.). First, Blum establishes the pre-promise, “pre-Hoseanic”, northern Israelite Bethel account in 28,11-13a*.15*.16-22²⁵, despite Van Seters’s challenge on the early dating²⁶.

²⁴ There are three notable modifications. First, Blum gave up his earlier rigorous pursuit for the original independent “block” of Bethel *Kultgründungssage* (11-13aa.16-19a). Rather than supposing its independent existence, now Blum thinks it is a tradition available to the author of the Jacob story *Jakoberzählung*. BLUM, “Noch einmal”, 38-40. As a corollary, the first two strata (the original etiology and the composition layer) of his earlier model are combined into the new basic layer of the Bethel episode in the Jacob story. Second, the detailed stratification of the promise layer has been given up. Particularly, he no longer distinguishes between the pre-exilic (Vg1) and the exilic (Vg2) layers and merges them into a unified exilic layer, *Vätergeschichte* (Vg). Now, the four layers in the chart 1 (2-5) belong to one exilic layer. In *Vätergeschichte*, Blum had dated vv. 13aß-14a to the pre-exilic Judean Vg1 (290-297), while assigning v. 14b to the exilic Vg2 as the above chart shows (354). Such a simplified position has been already noted in his *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin 1990) 214, n. 35. Cf. CARR, *Fractures*, 205-208 for an exilic dating of these verses. Third, the basic layer (Jakoberzählung) now includes YHWH’s speech of protection (v. 15a) unlike his earlier reconstruction, where YHWH does appear (v. 13aa) but without giving any speech. He came to this conclusion based on allusions in Hosea 12,5.7 to a divine appearance at Bethel incident. See Blum, “Noch einmal”, 44-51. Carr also originally thought v. 15 did not belong to the original Bethel layer but assigned it to a non-P revision. CARR, *Fractures*, 207. Yet he also changed his position and considers v. 15a (at least part of it) an original part of the northern Bethel account, based on the reference of the divine appearance at Bethel incident in 35,3 and Hos 12,5.7. CARR, “Genesis 28,10-22”, 410.

²⁵ BLUM, “Noch einmal”, 54.

²⁶ Within Pentateuchal scholarship, Van Seters led the challenge against this early dating, which, in fact, had formed one of the reasons for Blum’s modification discussed above. For Van Seters, 28,10.13-15.16aßb.19b.20-22 all belong to the work of his exilic Yahwist, who made use of the earlier cult etiology (vv. 11.12.16aa.17-19a). The crux of his challenge laid against Carr (and indirectly to Blum as well), thereby, centered on questioning the alleged northern Israelite edition of the Jacob story. J. VAN SETERS, “Divine Encounter at Bethel (Gen 28,10-22) in Recent Literary-Critical Study of Genesis”, *ZAW* 110 (1998) 503-513; ID., *Prologue*, 293-294. The main basis for his claim is (a) that 28,10 is connected to the surrounding J material and (b) that the vow (28,20-22) presupposes the promise (28,13-15) and thus belongs to the same level. His first claim is justifiable, but not much so is the second — the more critical of the two. None of his arguments for the dependence of vv. 20-22 on vv. 13-15, in fact, apply directly to vv. 13aß-14

Blum's early dating might sound audacious, particularly in light of the recent minimalist trend that favors later dating²⁷. In fact, a number of observations appear to justify, if not favor, this early northern Israelite origin²⁸. At Bethel, YHWH appears as a deity unknown to Jacob, in a way quite similar to Exod 3, where Moses first encounters YHWH. Jacob's vow, "YHWH will be my God" (28,21b), is otherwise difficult to understand²⁹. This implies that the Jacob story once existed without the preceding Abraham narrative. Moreover, Jacob's vow to build a temple and pay tithe (28,22) is probably designed to elicit the reader's response of support for the cultic function of the Bethel sanctuary. It is, then, most likely that this vow was written at a time when Bethel was functioning as a religious center³⁰. Besides, it is difficult to imagine an exilic Judean scribe composing a founding myth of Bethel, a major rival shrine of Jerusalem — and even calling for a continued support for it — without leaving any explicit mention to Jerusalem in the entire book of Genesis³¹.

but rather focus on v. 15. Based on this partial literary connection of vv. 20-22, Van Seters made a sweeping claim that the entire promise speech (vv. 13-15) must be assigned to the exilic J. Once the alleged unity of vv. 13-15 is dissolved, however, the entire argument can no longer stand.

²⁷ For a critique of this movement, see J. DAY, ed., *In Search of Pre-Exilic Israel*. Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar (JSOTSup 406; London 2004).

²⁸ See CARR, *Fractures*, 204-215, 256-271, 298-300 for arguments for the independence of the Jacob story in general. See also M.A. SWEENEY, "Puns, Politics, and Perushim in the Jacob cycle: A Case Study in Teaching the English Hebrew Bible", *Shofar* 9 (1991) 103-118.

²⁹ The common explanation that a *personal* connection (not through his father Isaac) is first made here is unconvincing and an imposition of modern individualism on the ancient text. See, e.g., VAN SETERS, "Divine Encounter", 508-509.

³⁰ In *Vätergeschichte*, Blum assigned vv. 20-22 to his "Kompositionsschicht", a layer through which the earlier etiology has been incorporated into the Jacob story, which he dates to the time of Jeroboam I (97). To be sure, Bethel may have continued to function in the later neo-Babylonian and Persian periods. See, e.g., J. BLENKINSOPP, "Bethel in the Neo-Babylonian Period", *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, 93-107; KNAUF, "Bethel"; J. GOMES, *The Sanctuary of Bethel and the Configuration of Israelite Identity* (BZAW 368; Berlin 2006); and M. KÖHLMÖS, *Bet-El—Erinnerungen an eine Stadt*. Perspektiven der alttestamentlichen Bet-El-Überlieferung (FAT 49; Tübingen 2006). Yet the supposed revival of this ancient shrine in a later period does not automatically exclude a possibility of its pre-exilic origin.

³¹ Against this, Van Seters's apology for his exilic Yahwist sounds forced: "this reinterpretation could have in mind the Jerusalem temple and its restoration under the guise of this Bethel = 'house of God'" or "perhaps the

The second level constitutes the exilic Judean layer Vg (equivalent of proto-Genesis [pG] of Carr), in which the promise of the land and progeny in 28:13*-14 is added to the original northern sanctuary tradition. The secondary nature of the promise is evident³². YHWH's promise for the land and progeny appears abrupt at best against the current narrative context of Jacob's flight and the discovery of a sacred place. Considering Jacob's current circumstances, the promise of guidance and protection (v. 15) fits better. Jacob does not mention the promise of the land and progeny when he wakes up but only that of the protection. Later accounts in the Jacob story (e.g., 31,13; 35,1) do not seem to recall this ancestral promise either³³. Further, the basic vocabulary of the narrative, e.g., "place" or "stone", does not appear in vv. 13-14.

Now we have established two main levels of the Bethel accounts: the pre-exilic northern layer and the exilic Judean edition. The subsequent discussion, then, focuses on the transition between the first two literary layers in the Bethel account (see the above chart), as established by Blum. Note that this exilic edition Vg (or pG) is the layer in which the southern Abraham tradition³⁴ and the northern Jacob tradition are combined into a unified patriarchal narrative. Redaction critics, then, customarily account for the inserted promise (28,13*-14) as a redactional bridge through which Judean scribes attempted to connect these two originally independent tradition blocks³⁵. But my interest goes one step beyond that redactional

Yahwist was not committed to the view that the rebuilt temple had to be in Jerusalem". VAN SETERS, *Prologue*, 301. For a similar observation, see GOMES, *The Sanctuary of Bethel*, 76.

³² Both Blum and Carr base their argument on the connections established between the promise speech in our text as well as Gen 12,1-7 and 13,14-16. BLUM, *Vätergeschichte*, 289-301; CARR, *Fractures*, 180-83. See also SCHMID, *Dual Origins*, 103. Note esp. the close affinity between Gen 28,13-14 and 13,14-16. Both chapters are placed in a strategic point, right after parting with their kindred when they were going through a troubling phase of their lives.

³³ Cf. CARR, *Fractures*, 205-206.

³⁴ For an important study regarding Abraham's position among the southern tribes, see R.E. CLEMENTS, *Abraham and David*. Genesis XV and its Meaning for Israelite Tradition (SBT 2/5; Naperville, IL 1967) 35-46. Yet, Clements, working in the 1960s, argued, "the priority given to Abraham as the great ancestor of all Israel reflects the position of pre-eminence which was claimed by Judah at this time". For a critique of Clements's position, see N.E. WAGNER, "Abraham and David?", *Studies on the Ancient Palestinian World*. Festschrift F.V. Winnet (eds. J.W. WEVERS – D.B. REDFORD) (Toronto 1972) 117-140.

³⁵ E.g. RENDTORFF, "Jakob in Bethel", 518; CARR, *Fractures*, 181-182; KRATZ, *Composition*, 260, 263-264, 269.

bridge. Why did Judean scribes try to combine the two ancestral traditions in the first place? Put differently, why did these Judean scribes decide to remember their past in that particular way?

II. Judean Reworking of the Bethel Account

Redaction critics have given little attention to this transitional period (i.e., the post-722/ pre-587 B.C.E. era) between the northern Israelite layer and the southern exilic layer. It appears that most critics take for granted an identity already common to Judah and Israel³⁶, and thus they further assume northern traditions would have been naturally transferred into the south in the wake of the Assyrian threat, which then resulted in a combined “improved version”³⁷.

Against this backdrop, the advantage of Na’aman’s proposal lies in its efficacy in explaining this elusive question as to why Judeans took over the Israelite tradition during this transitional period. Na’aman helps us realize that the Judean takeover of the Israelite tradition was not a matter of course: behind the literary takeover lies a great deal of struggle of Judah to overcome the memory of dominant Israel and their desire to take over the prestigious identity as Israel. Following Na’aman, I propose that the establishment of this exilic patriarchal narrative (Vg), with a decisive combination of the Abraham and Jacob traditions, can be understood as an outgrowth of the post-722 B.C.E. Judean identity reconstruction. That is to say, had there not been such an identity redefinition for Judah — in other words, had Judah been felled by Assyria as well — Judeans would have remembered their ancestral story very differently from what we now have. The fall of Samaria provided a rare opportunity for Judeans to rethink their identity, and a creative appropriation of the northern tradition was an important part of establishing a countermemory to overcome the pre-existing memory.

If the Judean reworking of the Bethel account is read in this particular framework, the insertion of an Abrahamic promise in 28,13*-14 takes on added significance, certainly more than a mere redactional bridge. One can see it as a literary sign of the Judean scribes’ claim to ownership

³⁶ To see, again, how this idea has been recently challenged, see Na’aman, “Patrimony”, 1-2.

³⁷ R.N. WHYBRAY, *The Making of the Pentateuch*. A Methodological Study (JSOTSup 53; Sheffield 1987), 49. E.g., for those scholars who support the classical source criticism, J and E are thought to have been combined at this stage, e.g., R.E. FRIEDMAN, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (New York 1987) 87. See BADEN, *J, E, and the Redaction*, 287-303 for a critique of the unstated assumption behind this.

of this foundational northern tradition. In order to make this significance evident, it is necessary to locate the function of this insertion of the promise in 28,13*-14 within the broader exilic redaction (Vg) to which it belongs. Therefore, I will first briefly review this broader reworking in Vg, particularly in relation to the Jacob tradition to the Abraham tradition and then return to revisit the significance of the inserted promise to the Bethel account.

In many ways, Judean scribes' reworking of the northern Jacob tradition resembles the Assyrian scribes' redirection of the earlier Babylonian tradition. After Sennacherib's conquest of Babylonia, Assyrian scribes reworked Enūma Eliš, the foundational Babylonian epic of creation³⁸. One of the decisive changes made by this Assyrian reworking is that the Babylonian god Marduk was replaced by Assyrian Ashur. Furthermore, Ashur is spelled AN.ŠAR, the name of a god who preceded Marduk in the Babylonian theogony³⁹. The ramifications of this literary reworking are apparent: not only is Assyria's position in the Mesopotamian mythical world secured, but also Assyria's supremacy over Babylonia is legitimized.

Against this analogy, then, the sheer fact that the Abraham tradition is placed ahead of the Jacob tradition — Jacob being Abraham's grandson — must be taken seriously⁴⁰. Just as Assyrian scribes elevated the status of their god, Judean scribes placed Abraham at a higher position than Jacob in genealogy. To be sure, Judeans did not make a change in the realm of deities because they, unlike Assyrians, worshipped the same deity with the northern Israelites. Rather, they reworked the ancestral history, which, in fact, may have warranted a similar outcome.

This subtle, but decisive, touch appears to have changed the way in which Israel's past was remembered. Israel had always defined their identity through Jacob. Judah may have been part of that Israel or at least may have longed for a placement within that Israel⁴¹. So when the oppor-

³⁸ For a more detailed bibliography on Sennacherib's reform, see NA'AMAN, "Patrimony", 11, n. 29.

³⁹ NA'AMAN, "Patrimony", 12. For a detailed discussion, see W.G. LAMBERT, "The Assyrian Recension of Enūma Eliš", *Assyrien im Wandel der Zeiten* (eds. H. WAETZOLDT – H. HAUPTMANN) (Heidelberg 1997) 77-79.

⁴⁰ Here, I assume a genealogical relation in a biblical text not as something given but as socially constructed. See R.R. WILSON, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (Yale Near Eastern Researches 7; New Haven, CT 1977).

⁴¹ See CLEMENTS, *Abraham and David*, 44 esp. n. 34 for the citation of T.H. Robinson's foundational study of arguments for Judah's Canaanite origin. For an argument for Judah's exclusion from the "all Israel" during the time of Saul's reign, see also J.W. FLANAGAN, "Judah in All Israel", *No Famine in the Land. Studies in Honor of John L. McKenzie* (eds. J.W. FLANAGAN – A.W. ROBINSON) (Missoula, MT 1975) 101-116.

tunity arose after the fall of the Northern Kingdom, Judeans could entertain the possibility of taking over that prestigious position of Israel. In order to justify their right to the assumption, Judeans placed Abraham, the ancestor of the southern tribes based on Hebron, in the higher place in the new Israelite genealogy. Now, without wiping out, or forgetting, the memory of Jacob, Judeans could find a way to redefine their identity: not only through Jacob's lineage but also through the founding role now bestowed on Abraham. In this regard, Abraham's foundational placement in the Israelite genealogy may reflect the Judean desire to buttress their right to take over the position of Israel.

To be sure, to redefine a nation's identity is not a simple task⁴². It may very well confront resistance, both from the outside and inside. For instance, the memory of the long-standing inferiority to the Northern Kingdom was not something that could be dismissed so easily. So many Judeans continued to remember Jacob as their father⁴³, that is, together with Abraham. This perhaps means that the Judeans' program was not directed against Jacob's role as the progenitor of the twelve tribes of Israel but specifically against the founding role once bestowed on him. Without stripping the still important role from Jacob, now Abraham takes over the founding place as the first father of Israel. He thus takes the first space of what later becomes the triad of the Israelite ancestry, "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob".

Dtr uses a similar strategy. David's founding role as the model king of the united monarchy is highlighted, though without denying Judah's minor position during the subsequent era. Then David's kingdom, remembered as an idyllic memory of the distant past, served well as the basis for the

⁴² This redefinition may have required an enlightenment of a sort, which could happen slowly in the people's mind. To this, prophets like Isaiah appear to have contributed significantly, as seen in his interpretation of YHWH's delivery of Jerusalem from Sennacherib's threat (Isa 37) and his subsequent promotion of the idea of YHWH's choice of Jerusalem and the new role of Judah in this new era. Slowly yet steadily, through a debate among diverging ideas and suggestions by varying participants (such as prophets, priests, and scribes), the Judeans finally came to be convinced that they were meant to take over the Israelite heritage.

⁴³ In fact, Judeans did not have to forget this rich tradition, which is now without its owner. With a successful program of promoting Judah as the new Israel, Judah in fact could assume and take advantage of all the Jacob tradition as our tradition (because we=Israel). In doing so, Jacob's genealogy, once a dramatic device to emphasize the eventual birth of the beloved son, Joseph, transforms into a legitimization of Judah's right as a practical first-born of Jacob — in the particular way in which Judeans appropriated this genealogy. Although Judah is the fourth son of Jacob, all three sons born ahead of him, Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, are somehow dismissed as legitimate heirs of Jacob. See Gen 35,22 and Gen 34. Such a dismissal becomes clearer in the later Priestly text in Gen 49,3-4.5-7.

later Judean claim to its right to reclaim supremacy in Israel. If so, both pre-P Genesis and DtrH contribute in overcoming the dominant memory of the past by providing a powerful countermemory as the basis for a new identity with which they define themselves in a new era⁴⁴.

In addition to this genealogical reworking, there is another hint of an implicit polemic against the idea of Jacob as the founder of Israel. In the beginning of his narrative and immediately after receiving the grand divine commission (Gen 12,1-3), Abraham makes his journey to the land of Canaan. Coming out of Haran, Abraham settles at Shechem and builds an altar there (Gen 12,7); he moves down to Bethel and builds an altar between Bethel and Ai (Gen 12,8)⁴⁵. After a brief sojourn in Egypt, he comes back to Bethel and eventually moves down to Hebron (Gen 12,4-13,18). Markedly, this repeats precisely Jacob's itinerary in his journey back home when he comes out of Haran (Gen 33-35)⁴⁶. Perhaps what we see is Abraham's conquest of the lands that Jacob owned—not in reality but in literature, by the tips of the scribes' styluses. As Assyrian kings march through town after town in a *palū* campaign⁴⁷, Abraham marches through Jacob's land. Subtle though it may be, the skillful pen of the scribes establishes a ground for the Judean claim to Abraham's founding role in the Israelite heritage. As a result, Abraham is now remembered as the founder of Israel, though Jacob still may retain the position as the father of the twelve tribes of Israel: Abraham is the receiver of the promise and blessing (12,1-3), the holder of the covenant (15,18), and the founder of the major cultic sites (12,6-9; 13,18).

⁴⁴ In this regard, Clements's claim that Abraham narrative was used to serve Davidic kingdom has to be modified. Traditions of both Abraham and David appear to represent two contemporary attempts of the later period, responding to the demand of their time, to legitimize Judeans' rightful heirship of Israel.

⁴⁵ On the significance of the altar building, see W. ZWICKEL, "Der Altarbau Abrahams zwischen Bethel und Ai (Gen 12f.). Ein Beitrag zur Datierung des Jahwisten", *BZ NF* 36 (1992) 207-219; Id., "Die Altarbaunotizen im Alten Testament", *Bib* 73 (1992) 533-546; S. RIECKER, "Ein theologischer Ansatz zum Verständnis der Altarbaunotizen der Genesis", *Bib* 87 (2006) 526-530.

⁴⁶ Scholars have long noted that the Abraham tradition parallels the Jacob story. That parallel nature has normally been accounted for as a redactional device used to mold the Abraham tradition into the Jacob story. E.g., A. DE PURY, *Promesse divine et légende culturelle dans le cycle de Jacob*. Genèse 28 et les traditions patriarcales (Paris 1975) 82. Yet the striking level of parallel suggests that below the surface of the text lies an implicit polemic against Jacob's founding role.

⁴⁷ See H. TADMOR, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study", *JCS* 12 (1958) 22-40, 77-100. My thanks go to Professor M. Sweeney for bringing my attention to this article and its implications on Abraham's itinerary in Gen 12-13.

Thus far, we have reviewed the significance of the Judean reworking of the Jacob tradition, focusing on Jacob's relative position to Abraham. The insertion of 28,13*-14 in the Bethel account, then, must be understood in view of this broader Judean redirection in Vg, insofar as the inserted promise belongs to the same redactional stage. In fact, this seemingly minor insertion, viewed in light of the previous discussion, appears quite significant. By means of this insertion of Abraham's promise, that which once served as a founding myth of the national shrine of the Northern Kingdom transforms into one of many episodes in which Abraham's promise is transferred, first to Isaac (Gen 26,2-5; 24-25) and now to Jacob⁴⁸. The Bethel account is detached from its original geographic, religious, and cultural setting and now placed within the realm of the Patriarchal narrative. It is no longer the *Sitz im Leben* but the *Sitz in der Literatur*⁴⁹ that dictates the meaning of this account. The story no longer exists to support the glory of the northern Israelite national sanctuary and its ancestor; it extends its life only within the new narrative that purports to honor Abraham as the founder of Israel.

It is intriguing to compare this Judean reinterpretation with the earlier Israelite appropriation of the supposed Canaanite *hieros logos* tradition. It was not originally Israelite tradition; Israelites took over the existing Canaanite tradition around Bethel⁵⁰, as the divine epithet "El" indicates, and claimed ownership of the tradition, through which they defined their central religious identity in the name of Jacob. Yes, history repeats itself. Now it is the Judeans who take over this northern Israelite account and redirect it in the name of Abraham. Judeans may have been marginalized by their powerful northern neighbor in history; in literature, however, they rebel against the founding tradition of the hegemony that once was used to oppress them. Claiming ownership of this tradition, then, is an important part of the program by which Judeans reconceptualize their role as the new Israel. As the victor writes history, it was the story of the survived Judah that shaped the memory of the past for generations to come.

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So why did Judeans call themselves "Israel"? To Na'aman's proposal that Judeans actively took over the title "Israel" when it became suddenly available after the fall of Samaria, I have attempted to add literary evidence as an important piece of the puzzle that completes the supposed Judean program of taking over Israelite identity and heritage.

⁴⁸ Cf. Gen 35,9-15, a Priestly reiteration of the same idea.

⁴⁹ For the first use of the term, see W. RICHTER, *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft*. Entwurf einer alttestamentlichen Literaturtheorie und Methodologie (Göttingen 1971) 117, 125, 148.

⁵⁰ See, e.g., C. WESTERMANN, *Genesis 12-36. A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN 1985) 453.

In the end, it appears that the sudden fall of northern Israel and its remarkable survival of the Assyrian threat forced Judeans into a vital societal debate negotiating their identity against the new reality. In that regard, I see Na'aman's proposal as an important challenge to biblical scholarship that has tended to overlook the vital role of the southern Judeans in actively reshaping their own identity by means of reinterpretation of the northern tradition. This reconceptualization of their identity may very well have begun in the pre-exilic Judean society, or more precisely around the time of Josiah, following Na'aman's suggestion, when Judah's political aspiration grew larger. Although this aspiration did not last long — Judeans quickly were forced to deal with an entirely different theological challenge from their own fall — the reconceptualization continued, though in different forms, during and after the exile. If so, to trace this continued development of Judean identity reconstruction through many other texts dating from this turbulent era would be a promising way of furthering research in the same direction.

In the story, Jacob struggled with God (or "a man"), prevailed over him, and became Israel (Gen 32,24.28). In history, Judah struggled with northern Israel, somehow prevailed over it, and ultimately became the new Israel.

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SUMMARY

Nadav Na'aman has recently proposed that the Judean appropriation of Israel's identity occurred as a result of the struggle for the patrimony of ancient Israel. This paper locates textual evidence for such a struggle in the Judean reworking of the Jacob tradition, particularly the Bethel account (Gen 28,10-22), and argues that taking over the northern Israelite shrine myth after the fall of northern Israel was part of the ongoing Judean reconceptualization of their identity as "Israel" that continued to be developed afterwards.

Note sur la traduction araméenne de 1 R 19,12

Dans son article “The Hebrew Word דְּמָמָה and the Root d-m-m I”¹, E.D. Reymond offre un tableau complet des usages de דְּמָמָה et maintient le rattachement traditionnel de ce substantif à la racine I דָּמָם “être silencieux, calme”, plutôt qu’à des racines homonymes “gémir” ou “murmurer” proposées par certains lexicographes. Dès lors, ce qu’Elie perçoit, lors de la théophanie au mont Horeb (1 R 19,12), c’est un “son de doux silence, un son doucement silencieux”².

Reymond cite, parmi les divers indices qu’il avance pour soutenir sa thèse, la traduction de l’expression דְּמָמָה דִּקְהָה קוּל par le Tg: קוּל דְּמִשְׁבַּחִין בַּחֲשִׁי qu’il traduit par le “son de ceux qui chantent les louanges à voix basse”³. Dans sa note 16, il récusé avec raison quelques traductions divergentes, comme par exemple celle de G. Vermes: “ceux qui bénissent silencieusement”⁴.

Je suis tout à fait d’accord tant avec son exposé principal qu’avec sa traduction du Tg. Mais ne peut pas aller plus loin en ce qui concerne la traduction araméenne? D’où viennent, en effet, ces anges qui chantent les louanges? De l’imagination débridée du traducteur? Pour ce qui est des anges, il nous faut replacer la scène dans le tableau d’ensemble: le traducteur araméen a conçu la théophanie (exprimée par le verbe désincarné אֲתַגְלִי “se révéler”) comme accompagnée, non de divers phénomènes naturels, mais de diverses armées d’anges: les anges du vent, les anges du tremblement de terre, les anges du feu, et enfin, nos anges de la louange. Quant au verbe “chanter les louanges”, je crois pouvoir l’expliquer ainsi. En hébreu, il existe deux racines devenues homonymes. La première, I שָׁבַח (piel/hiphil) “rendre silencieux, calmer”, est utilisée pour les flots déchaînés (Ps 65,8⁵; 89,10); son tempéra-

¹ *Biblica* 90 (2009) 374-388.

² “The Hebrew Word דְּמָמָה”, 377: “a sound of gentle quiet”.

³ “The Hebrew Word דְּמָמָה”, 380: “a sound of those praising quietly”. La traduction de D.J. HARRINGTON – A. J. SALDARINI, *The Aramaic Bible* (Edinburgh 1987) X, 254, est plus ou moins identique: “... the voice of those who were praising softly”.

⁴ “The Hebrew Word דְּמָמָה”, 380: “those who bless silently”.

⁵ La traduction du piel שָׁבַח “rendre calme, apaiser” dans la LXX par le contraire σπαρασσω “perturber”, au Ps 65, pourrait s’expliquer par le verbe araméen en métathèse בַּחֲשִׁי, qui signifie “examiner, secouer, agiter” (et plus particulièrement en syriaque “perturber”; cfr. R. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, col. 508). Cette modification serait volontaire, dans la mesure où le même verbe, dans le même contexte, a été fidèlement traduit dans le Ps 89 (par

ment (?) (Pr 29,11⁶); cf. l'arabe *sabaḥa*. La seconde, II שָׁבַח (piel), "chanter les louanges" est proche de l'arabe *sabaḥa* (avec une gutturale différente). Ce deuxième verbe se rencontre dans les textes bibliques plus tardifs et est probablement un aramaisme; en araméen, en effet, cette racine שָׁבַח "louer" est courante, et seule attestée, d'ailleurs. La traduction du Tg s'explique sans doute par ce "double" champ sémantique reconnu à la racine שָׁבַח: à partir du verbe du TM דָּמַם "être silencieux, calme", le traducteur araméen a sans doute pensé au synonyme hébreu I שָׁבַח, et, de là est passé à l'homonyme II שָׁבַח (= araméen). Bien sûr, il ne faut pas imaginer cette démarche de manière trop précise, dans la mesure où les Anciens ne raisonnaient pas en termes de racines homonymes, mais concevaient vraisemblablement un unique verbe à plusieurs pôles⁷. Mais je pense pouvoir affirmer que c'est bien le rapprochement דָּמַם – שָׁבַח qui permet de comprendre l'interprétation du Targum, qui ne prend dès lors, à sa manière, qu'une liberté très relative avec le texte hébreu. Ce raisonnement ne tient que si l'on pose comme hypothèse que le traducteur araméen rattachait bien דָּמַם à דָּמַם "être silencieux, calme".

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le verbe καταπραΰνω "adoucir"); le traducteur a voulu imprimer l'image d'un Dieu caractérisé par de puissants bouleversements naturels.

⁶ La racine utilisée en Pr 29,11 est discutée. Quoi qu'il en soit, il est intéressant de noter que la Peshitta et le Tg l'ont remplacée par la racine חָשַׁב "penser, considérer", en relation de métathèse avec le TM שָׁבַח. La variante du Tg חָשַׁל correspond également à חָשַׁב (cfr. Tg Ps 21,12; Tg Jb 21,27: ces deux verbes sont parallèles; aux Ps 35,4.20;36,5;41,8;140,3.5; et en Jb 35,2, le TM חָשַׁב a été traduit dans le Tg חָשַׁל).

⁷ Cf. J. BARR, "Contributions and Comments: did Isaiah know about Hebrew root meanings?", *ET* 75 (1963-64) 242: "These men were not modern scholars whose first thought in handling any Hebrew word was to get at the root. The identification of roots is altogether a comparatively modern phenomenon; so far as I know, it was a new thing when the existence of roots in Hebrew was recognized in the Middle Ages".

SUMMARY

Why has the Aramaic translator rendered the mysterious “sound of subdued silence” (קול דממה דקה) in 1 Kgs 19:12 by “the sound of those (= the angels) praising quietly” (קל דמשבחין בחשי)? It can be that, with the root דמם “to be silent, quiet” in front of him, the meturguman has thought of the synonym I שבח “to calm” and from there has “skipped” to the (mainly Aramaic) homonym II שבח “to praise”. This connection between דמם and I שבח + II שבח would thus explain the Aramaic translation, which in its own peculiar way stays quite close to its Hebrew model.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

James T. SPARKS, *The Chronicler's Genealogies*. Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1–9 (Academia Biblica 28). Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2008. xvii-385 p. 15 × 23

For a long time, the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1–9 have typically been considered to have no internal consistency or purpose and little relation to the narrative portions of Chronicles. During the seventies of the last century, the publications by R.R. Wilson relating to the biblical genealogies paved the way for a more serious study, specifically of the first nine chapters of the Book of Chronicles, which some twenty years ago resulted in a monograph by M. Oeming, *Das wahre Israel*. Die »genealogische Vorhalle« 1 Chronik 1-9 (BWANT 128; Stuttgart 1990) that in my view should be considered a serious breakthrough for the study of these chapters.

In a doctoral thesis supervised by Jim Trotter at Murdoch University, Perth, Australia, a fresh attempt to understand these nine chapters in the best possible way has been made by J.T. Sparks. It is his contention that 1 Chr 1,1–9,34 has a chiasmic structuring,, made up of two halves of six levels each, with the sixth level (1 Chr 6,33-34 [F] // 1 Chr 6,35-38 [F']) operating as the pivot point for the entire structure. Each level in the first half (A-F) has its corresponding level in the second half (F'-A'). As a consequence, the central concern of the Chronicler's genealogies is the cultic officials and the cultic place.

Sparks therefore starts his investigation at the centre of the chiasm and studies the genealogies in reverse alphabetical sequence of the levels, viz. from F /F' to A /A'. His accurate analyses of the successive levels are quite impressive and bring a lot of material to light. As an example, Sparks' circumstantial analysis of 1 Chr 6,39-66 has to be mentioned (129-152). In minute detail he is able to refute the thesis that this passage was the source of Joshua 21, a point of view that A Graeme Auld has propagated in so many publications, all to be found reprinted in his *Joshua Retold*. Synoptic Perspectives (Edinburgh 1988).

The hypothesis that 1 Chronicles 1–9 has a perfect chiasmic structure not only is a literary feature, but it also has a fundamental effect as to the theological message of the Book of Chronicles as a whole: "The Chronicler's purpose is to ensure that the proper cultic officials are offering the proper cultic offerings in the proper cultic place, and that the people are

supporting the cult so as to maintain its proper functioning. ... The actions of kings, prophets, soldiers, and people which are recorded within Chronicles must be investigated as to how those actions support or undermine the place of the cult and the cultic officials, with the appropriate warning in relation to the Chronicler's own day and community" (363).

With this perspective in mind, it necessarily follows that the Davidic kings are not the primary theme of the Book of Chronicles. According to Sparks, neither the Chronicler, nor his community, "either anticipated or even wanted a return to an indigenous king in general, or to a Davidic king in particular. ... The genealogies themselves, however, indicate that David, although important for his contribution to the cultic life of Israel ... is of no greater importance for the Chronicler's community than Saul. Neither is the focus of the genealogies, for both are located on lower, supporting genealogical levels" (365).

In his analysis of level C (1 Chr 2,3-4,23), which is the genealogy of Judah, Sparks is able to convince the reader that the "Jabez narrative" (4,9-10) is a major clue to the theology of the Book of Chronicles (238-241).

Before investigating level A (1 Chr 1,1-53), Sparks devotes a special chapter to 'The Chronicler's use of his sources' (291-317). The major conclusion of it is not that the Chronicler is selective, feels free to alter his source text(s) and so on, but rather that it is no longer reasonable "to assume that it is merely the non-synoptic portions of the text which are significant for understanding the Chronicler's theology. ... Future studies must look at what is included as well as excluded" (313).

No doubt, this is a monograph everyone who in some way has to do with the Book of Chronicles is compelled to read, as it presents an original and intriguing analysis of its first nine chapters.

However, the reader is left with some problems and questions:

The final verses of the genealogical chapters (1 Chr 9,35-44) have *not* been included within the chiasmic structure. The reason for this far-reaching decision is given only in a footnote: 'This section, which is a near repetition of 1 Chr 8,29-38, properly introduces the death of Saul contained in 1 Chr 10' (29, n. 112). It goes without saying that Sparks would undoubtedly have strengthened his case, if he had paid some more substantial attention to this point of view, since the repetition of the Gibeon genealogy is a major problem in scholarly research.

The very center of the chiasmic structure (F // F') consists of just two (6,33-34) and four verses (6,35-38) respectively, and, moreover, has a curious opening: "*and* their brothers the Levites" (6,33) that not immediately reminds one of being the absolute centre of the book.

Each of the levels A-F is of approximately the same length as its corresponding level (F'-A'). The only exception is levels C // C', which relate to the tribal details of Judah (1 Chr 2,3-4,23) and Benjamin (1 Chr 8,1-40) from which the royal lines of David and Saul arose. In my view, Sparks

does not adduce arguments or evidence why level C needs 1013 words, while level C' has only 306 words. Moreover, the analysis of level C is burdened by a rather complicated reflection (229-236) upon the interpretation by G. Knoppers and H.G.M. Williamson of 1 Chr 2,3-4,23.

The most serious problem which came to my mind when reading this monograph is found in Chapter 12 that offers an analysis of level A, the section about 1 Chr 1,1-54, entitled "The world before Israel". Here the Chronicler has copied a number of genealogies from the Book of Genesis (Gen 10; 25; 36) just as he added a number of verses of his own ('Sondergut'). In this context, Sparks makes an observation that according to him the Chronicler has removed all references to cults, cultic places, cultic worship, and the possession of the land that were present in his source (i.e. the Book of Genesis). Subsequently he concludes; 'The barrenness of 1 Chr 1 is how the tradition described Judah during its exilic period: no temple, no cult, no officiating cultic officials, no land' (328). I wonder whether it really is proper, logical reasoning, to contend that 'Level A presented the barrenness of a society devoid of the Yahwistic cult' (361)? Or, as Sparks puts it into other words: "In effect, in 1 Chr 2-8 Israel had come out of the exile of 1 Chr 1 into a life of vitality centered upon the cult" (322). "The world before Israel", the title as given by Sparks to level A (1 Chr 1,1-54), in no way has a bearing on the exile! The conclusions following the analysis of this section, in my view, are the weakest part of this intriguing study.

Finally, it is a real pity that this monograph has no index of biblical references, especially with respect of the Book of Chronicles, since the sections of 1 Chr 1-9 are discussed in a non-canonical order. Therefore it is hard to find specific verses or pericopes easily.

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Bertrand PINÇON, *L'énigme du bonheur*. Étude sur le sujet du bien dans le livre de Qohélet (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 119). Leiden – Boston, Brill, 2008. Ixv-311 p. 17 × 24,5. \$ 158.00 – € 99.

L'autore è Docente di Esegesi nella Facoltà di Teologia dell'Università Cattolica di Lione, della cui diocesi è anche presbitero. *L'énigme du bonheur* costituisce la pubblicazione della sua Tesi dottorale sostenuta nella Facoltà di Teologia dell'Università Marc Bloch (Strasburgo) nel febbraio 2007, sotto la direzione del prof. Eberhard Bons.

La domanda di fondo dalla quale P. si muove è relativa al ruolo rivestito dalla gioia, dal piacere, dalla felicità nel libro del Qohélet; d'ora in poi parleremo semplicemente, seguendo P., di "felicità" ("bonheur").

La prima parte del libro è dedicata ad uno *status quaestionis*. Il pro-

blema da affrontare, per P., è in realtà ben noto a tutti gli studiosi del Qohelet, ovvero che essi si dividono tra coloro che considerano negativamente la felicità, fino a pensarla come una sorta di droga e coloro, invece, che la valutano positivamente. Il primo capitolo (13-36) riassume le tesi degli autori favorevoli a una lettura positiva della felicità nel Qohelet (Buzy, Gordis, Glasser, Whybray, Lohfink e più recentemente M. Maussion); il secondo capitolo, invece (37-46), affronta le tesi contrarie proposte da A. Schoors che al riguardo è senza dubbio l'autore oggi più significativo di questa tendenza negativa nei confronti della valutazione del tema della felicità nel Qohelet. Le pagine 48-50 (capitolo terzo) riassumono forse un po' velocemente la questione.

La seconda parte del libro è dedicata all'analisi dei testi qoheletici sulla felicità; il capitolo quarto (53-83) analizza i sette cosiddetti "ritornelli" sulla felicità, ossia i passi ben noti di Qo 2,24; 3,12; 3,22; 5,17; 8,15; 9,7; 11,9. A conclusione di questa analisi P. osserva che per il Qohelet la felicità non appare mai come una fuga dalla realtà (82), ma piuttosto si presenta come un bene prezioso che Dio offre all'uomo, nel contesto di una vita attiva; sono conclusioni non lontane da quelle già proposte da J. Y.-S. Pakh, *Il canto della gioia in Dio* (Istituto Universitario Orientale. Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici. Series Minor 52; Napoli 1996). P. osserva inoltre che appare riduttivo continuare a parlare di "ritornelli", a proposito dei testi sopra citati, e propone di definirli piuttosto come "parole di felicità". E' questo l'argomento del quinto e denso capitolo (84-125), nel quale P. esamina tali "parole di felicità" all'interno del contesto letterario nel quale esse si trovano inserite. L'indagine esegetica dimostra che tali "parole di felicità" non sono affatto estranee al contesto dell'intero libro del Qohelet; in modo particolare, dallo studio di P. appare una netta differenza tra le prime quattro parole di felicità, contenute nella prima metà del libro (Qo 1-6), che si mostrano come una risposta a una situazione umana ingiusta o incomprensibile, e le altre tre parole di felicità, presenti nella seconda metà del libro (Qo 7-12), che si rivelano piuttosto come un invito a cogliere senza tardare ciò che può dare piacere all'uomo. Notiamo soltanto come l'analisi della celebre pericope finale sulla felicità e sulla vecchiaia (11,7-12,8) sembri un po' troppo rapida.

Il sesto capitolo (126-168) analizza i diversi temi connessi con le parole di felicità, ovvero, prima di tutto, il tema della "vanità"; le parole di felicità vanno comprese, in questa chiave, sullo sfondo della transitorietà delle cose e della finitezza della vita umana e, insieme, sullo sfondo di carattere epistemologico della limitatezza del conoscere umano. Le parole di felicità costituiscono poi una sorta di risposta immediata alla domanda iniziale del libro (Qo 1,3; 3,9): "quale profitto c'è per l'uomo?". Nella seconda parte del Qohelet (Qo 7-12) le parole di felicità si legano invece a un'idea di saggezza intesa come accettazione di una gioia semplice offerta da Dio all'uomo. Infine, P. analizza le parole di felicità in relazione al tema dell'opera "che si compie sotto il sole" e insieme a quello del-

l'agire di Dio e, ancora, in relazione all'importante tema del "temere Dio" che, in quest'ottica, consiste nell'accettare di gioire gratuitamente dei doni di Dio (164).

La terza parte del libro affronta l'esortazione di Qo 7,14 considerandola come una parola supplementare di felicità. Lo studio di P. colma così una lacuna importante su un versetto difficile, spesso inteso dai commentatori soltanto in senso negativo. Il capitolo settimo (171-220) è interamente dedicato allo studio di Qo 7,14 visto nel contesto di Qo 7 (in particolare 7,15-8,17) e insieme come risposta all'interrogativo fondamentale di Qo 6,11-12, un testo che segna il passaggio alla seconda metà del libro. In questo passo, secondo P., malgrado i limiti naturali della sapienza umana, il Qohelet prende decisamente posizione a favore di una fiducia realistica nei confronti dei benefici offerti da Dio all'uomo (206); Qo 7,11-14 risponde così al testo iniziale di 1,13-15.

Il capitolo ottavo (221-245) è dedicato all'approfondimento dell'idea che il libro del Qohelet debba vedersi come suddiviso in due parti, ovvero in movimenti: Qo 1-6 e Qo 7-12. In particolare, P. approfondisce l'analisi del testo di Qo 6,10-12 inteso come chiave di volta del libro. In questi versetti, secondo P., l'uomo scopre i propri limiti nel tempo e nell'agire (cf. Qo 1-6), ma comprende anche che Dio è capace di dargli ciò che egli ignora: la felicità e il timore di Lui (cf. 244-245).

Il capitolo finale (246-270) ritorna sul problema della struttura del libro del Qohelet discutendo i lavori di Wright, Murphy, Seow e soprattutto l'approccio retorico proposto da Vittoria D'Alario; ma questo è in realtà il capitolo forse meno originale del libro. Anche nella conclusione (261-270) P. ritorna sulle posizioni di altri autori, e cioè Whybray, Schors, Gianto e Niccacci, lasciando poi aperta la possibilità di una sintesi finale relativa alla figura misteriosa del Qohelet (268).

Il libro si chiude con una sintetica bibliografia (271-279), una traduzione francese strutturata dell'intero libro del Qohelet (280-298), senz'altro molto utile al lettore, e un *abstract* in inglese (299-304), oltre ai consueti indici.

Da un punto di vista critico, un limite dello studio di P., già messo in luce dalle precedenti osservazioni, è quello di dipendere a volte troppo dai molti autori recenti che egli discute, e questo anche per quanto riguarda l'esegesi dei testi del Qohelet. Osservo al riguardo come a pagina 74, nota 66, P. mi attribuisce una opinione erronea circa l'idea che Qo 11,9 costituisca una glossa. Inoltre, alcuni passi difficili del Qohelet non vengono in realtà discussi come avrebbero dovuto, come avviene per il misterioso 'ôlam di Qo 3,11, inteso un po' troppo rapidamente come "eternità" (92-93 e 117). Così accade anche al testo senz'altro problematico di Qo 8,10.11-14 (106-107) e ancora a quello di Qo 5,8 (142). Il termine *hebel* è poi semplicemente tradotto con "vanité", senza in realtà un vero approfondimento del problema (cf. in particolare 129, nota 10). Da un punto di vista formale, si può ancora discutere la scelta di riportare il

testo ebraico del Qohelet a volte vocalizzato, a volte invece non vocalizzato; strana è in apertura del volume la doppia citazione greca di Gregorio il Taumaturgo, riportato poi in nota in traduzione inglese, piuttosto che in francese (14 e 16).

Queste osservazioni critiche non toccano tuttavia la sostanza del volume di P., che costituisce un contributo a mio parere molto positivo per comprendere più a fondo un tema del libro del Qohelet oggi troppo spesso minimizzato e addirittura per lo più negato, ovvero il tema della felicità.

Due aspetti, in particolare, meritano attenzione: prima di tutto l'idea difesa da P. che il Qohelet debba essere letto come un testo diviso in due parti molto diverse tra loro, ossia Qo 1-6 e 7-12. Tale divisione bipartita non dev'essere certamente esasperata, né può essere pensata come *la* soluzione alle presunte contraddizioni e alle ambiguità del Qohelet, ma rappresenta senz'altro una lettura pienamente giustificabile sia a livello letterario che retorico e tematico, che rende ragione della frattura tra i testi-*hebel* e i testi sulla gioia. Visto in questa prospettiva, il cosiddetto pessimismo del Qohelet, tante volte chiamato in causa, magari insieme al suo scetticismo e persino al suo ateismo, non appare più giustificabile; le affermazioni "negative" della prima parte del libro vanno infatti lette alla luce delle proposte della seconda parte del libro del Qohelet, relative a una saggezza semplice, capace di accogliere i doni che Dio fa all'uomo; in questo modo, il Qohelet non può essere definito né un pessimista né un ottimista, ma semplicemente un saggio d'Israele, pieno di umiltà e di sano realismo.

In secondo luogo, dal lavoro di P. emerge tutta l'importanza del testo di Qo 7,14, come abbiamo già sottolineato, in quanto ulteriore "parola di felicità" che trova il suo naturale sviluppo nel vero e proprio inno alla gioia di Qo 8,15 e diviene un'altra chiave importante per comprendere l'intero libro.

Le ambiguità del Qohelet, come lo stesso P. onestamente riconosce, non sono affatto risolte appieno, eppure questo studio costituisce un ulteriore e valido contributo verso una lettura del Qohelet nella quale la felicità rappresenta senza dubbio un tema assolutamente positivo, che pure non annulla la riflessione qoheletica su una vita umana che pur sempre appare al nostro saggio come un soffio.

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Werner H. SCHMIDT, *Das Buch Jeremia*. Kapitel 1-20 (ATD 20). Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008. xviii-340 p. 16,5 × 24

Der emeritierte Professor für Altes Testament an der Universität Bonn, Werner H. Schmidt, legt hiermit den ersten Band eines neuen Kommentars zum Jeremiabuch vor. Er wird nach Erscheinen des zweiten Bandes den

Vorgängerkommentar in der Reihe "Das Alte Testament Deutsch" ersetzen, der 1952 von Anton Weiser verfasst und 1981 in achter Auflage herausgegeben wurde. "Das Alte Testament Deutsch", als Predigthilfe für Pastoren entstanden, hatte sich in der zweiten Hälfte des vergangenen Jahrhunderts zu einer fachwissenschaftlichen Kommentarreihe entwickelt. Unter neuen Herausgebern wendet es sich nun wieder einer breiteren, mehr pastoral interessierten Leserschaft zu. Im Vorwort wird demgemäß betont, dass der vorliegende Kommentar "allgemein für Interessierte ohne größere Vorkenntnisse, auch der hebräischen Sprache Nicht-Kundige" (X) verständlich sein will. Der Band beginnt mit einem Verzeichnis der "Literatur zum Jeremiabuch", die in zwanzig Themenbereichen angeordnet ist (XI-XVIII), "nur eine kleine Auswahl", wie es zutreffend heißt.

In der *Einleitung* (1-41) werden einige für das Verständnis des Propheten und seines Buches wichtige Themenbereiche behandelt. Der erste Abschnitt stellt "Jeremias Situation und Wirkungsperioden" dar (1-7). Seine Verkündigung wird in die üblichen vier Phasen eingeteilt: 1. Frühzeitverkündigung, 2. bis zur ersten Eroberung Jerusalems, 3. zwischen der ersten und zweiten Eroberung Jerusalems, 4. nach der Zerstörung Jerusalems. Die Reform Joschijas wird sehr knapp, Jeremias Reaktion darauf ausführlicher dargestellt. Zuzustimmen ist der zusammenfassenden Beurteilung, der Prophet sei den Reformbemühungen des Königs "von vornherein zurückhaltend, vielleicht abwartend" begegnet (4).

Im nächsten Abschnitt wird "Jeremia als Person" vorgestellt (7-9). Seine Herkunft wird beschrieben und erwogen, inwiefern diese seine jerusalemkritische Haltung geprägt habe. Der von S. Hermann übernommene Einschätzung, dass bei Jeremia nichts von einer priesterlicher Denkweise zu erkennen sei (8 n. 38), muss allerdings widersprochen werden. Bereits Jer 2,3, wo Israel als "heilig für JHWH" und dessen Erstlingsfrucht definiert wird, zeigt, dass Jeremia sich durchaus priesterlicher Kategorien bediente, diese aber heilsgeschichtlich uminterpretierte.

In "Jeremias geistige Heimat" werden die traditionsgeschichtlichen Verbindungen zu anderen Schriftpropheten und zur Weisheitsliteratur (9-12) aufgezeigt.

Der Abschnitt "Jeremias Redeformen" liefert einen knappen Überblick über die sprachliche Form, über Formeln, geprägte Wendungen und Gattungen (12-16). Entgegen dem Titel werden hier auch die von den Redaktoren des Buches verwendeten Sprachformen behandelt.

"Jeremias Verkündigung" wird in elf assoziativ aneinander gereihten Punkten präsentiert (16-28): 1. Das Wirken des Propheten. 2. Die Kritik an der Abwendung von der ausschließenden JHWH-Verehrung. 3. Die Sozialkritik. 4. Weisheitlich geprägte Einsichten über den Menschen. 5. Die Kritik an der Kultpraxis Israels. 6. Die "Symbolhandlungen" als Veranschaulichung der prophetischen Botschaft. 7. Der Begriff "Schalom" in der Auseinandersetzung mit den Heilspropheten. 8. Die Form der Klage

und die Funktion der Konfessionen. 9. Die Heilsbotschaft für das Nordreich. 10. Neue theologische Einsichten. 11. Die jeremianische Theologie des Wortes Gottes (Zu dieser gehörte über das Gesagte hinaus ein Aspekt, der in der zweiten Buchhälfte im Vordergrund steht: die Schicksalsgenossenschaft von Gotteswort und Gottesbote, die gemeinsam angefeindet, eingesperrt und befreit werden. Man könnte deshalb von einer Vorstufe zur neutestamentlichen Inkarnation des Logos sprechen).

Die Einleitung schließt mit einem ausführlichen Kapitel "Zur Entstehung des Buches" (28-41). In seiner Rekonstruktion verbindet der Autor das auf B. Duhm und S. Mowinckel zurückgehende Schichtenmodell mit der redaktionsgeschichtlichen Analyse von W. Thiel. Ausgehend von Jer 36 sucht er die "Urrolle" in Kap. 1-6 (nicht wie üblich in Kap. 2-6!), ein Verfahren, das von neueren Autoren wie G. Fischer (*Jeremia 1-25* [HThK.AT; Freiburg u.a. 2005] 91-92) aus literarischen Gründen abgelehnt wird. Das zweite Überlieferungsstadium sieht Schmidt in den thematischen Sammlungen und den Konfessionen. Verbunden mit den Ich-Berichten und Symbolhandlungen repräsentieren diese ein Zwischenstadium in der Entstehung des Buches, das mit Kap. 20 endete. Die Sammlung von Prophetenworten, die Ich- und Er-Berichte lagen bereits vor, als die deuteronomistische Redaktion den Stoff durchgreifend bearbeitete und zu dem Buch formte, das weitgehend dem uns heute vorliegenden entspricht. Dem letzten Überlieferungsstadium werden post-deuteronomistische Nachträge wie Jer 10 und die Völkersprüche Jer 46-51 zugerechnet.

Das Problem der beiden Textfassungen, Septuaginta (LXX) und masoretischer Text (MT), deutet der Autor nur an, eine Entscheidung möchte er nur im Einzelfall treffen. Dass diese Frage für die Verkündigung Jeremias "weniger erheblich" sei, kann allerdings spätestens seit der Untersuchung von A. Schenker, *Das Neue am neuen Bund und das Alte am alten*. Jer 31 in der hebräischen und griechischen Bibel (FRLANT 212; Göttingen 2006), nicht mehr behauptet werden.

Auf die Einleitung folgt der eigentliche *Kommentar*, der neben einer neuen Übersetzung eine sprachlich-formale und inhaltlich-theologische Auslegung der einzelnen Perikopen bietet (42-340). Eingestreut sind vertiefende Exkurse: "Israel" als Anrede an Jerusalem und Juda (80-81), der Feind aus dem Norden (124-125), Jeremias Konfessionen (233-235) und das Verbot der Fürbitte (265-267).

Der *Übersetzung* sind Anmerkungen beigegeben, in denen verschiedene Probleme des Textverständnisses und der Textwiedergabe diskutiert werden. Dadurch dass in der Einleitung das Verhältnis zwischen LXX und MT nicht geklärt wurde, fehlt nun das Kriterium für eine Entscheidung zwischen den beiden Textfassungen. So erscheint es z.B. fast beliebig, ob Jer 11,7-8 als nachträgliche Hinzufügung von MT oder als nachträgliche Auslassung von LXX gedeutet wird (225 n. 4).

Der *Auslegung* werden längere oder kürzere, manchmal nur zwei, drei

Verse umfassende Abschnitte zugrunde gelegt. Deren Überschriften greifen ein inhaltliches Motiv, öfter in der Form eines direkten Zitats auf. Der dadurch entstehende Eindruck einer kleingliedrigen, unstrukturierten Textmasse wird noch dadurch verstärkt, dass größere Textblöcke mit Ausnahme von Kap. 1 nicht zusammenfassend behandelt werden.

Da es in diesem Rahmen nicht möglich ist, die Auslegung im Detail zu würdigen, müssen einige exemplarische Beobachtungen zur Exegese von Jer 7 genügen (174-190). Die Auslegung beginnt mit einer textgetreuen, gut lesbaren Übersetzung von Jer 7,1-15, die unter den Titel "Jeremias Tempelkritik" gestellt wird. In neun Fußnoten werden Probleme des Urtextes erörtert und wörtliche Übersetzungen hinzugefügt. Eine Fußnote verweist auf unterschiedliche Lesarten im masoretischen Text und in den griechischen und lateinischen Versionen (174 n. 2). Zwar bieten die Letzteren nach Auffassung des Autors "eher die ursprüngliche Fassung", in seiner Übersetzung folgt er dann aber doch der von ihm als sekundär angesehenen Lesart.

Die Auslegung geht nicht Vers für Vers voran, sondern diskutiert, ohne weitere Untergliederung, die formalen, inhaltlichen und theologischen Probleme des Textes. In unserem Fall werden zunächst die Motive aufgeführt, die schon früher im Buch auftauchten. Dann wird auf die doppelte Überlieferung der Tempelrede in Jer 7 und Jer 26 hingewiesen. Die Struktur von Jer 7,1-8,3 wird detailliert dargestellt, als grundlegende Orientierung für die weitere Auslegung.

Danach wird die ursprüngliche Verkündigung Jeremias rekonstruiert, wobei zwei literarkritische Operationen vorgenommen werden: a) typisch deuteronomistische Redewendungen werden ausgeschieden, b) der Grundbestand wird auf seine Kohärenz überprüft und mit den vermutlich authentischen Worten Jeremias verglichen.

Jeremias Tempelrede wird anschließend in die Tradition der prophetischen Kultkritik eingeordnet und in ihrer Besonderheit gewürdigt.

Der traditionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund der Zionstheologie wird aufgezeigt. Der Zusammenhang der Verbotsreihe Jer 7,9 mit dem Dekalog wird diskutiert, wobei der Hinweis auf die unterschiedliche Intention wichtig ist: während der Dekalog künftigem Fehlverhalten vorbeugen will, klagt der Prophet bereits begangene Vergehen an.

Zum Schluss der Auslegung wird die Intention der Redaktoren im Unterschied zur originalen Prophetenbotschaft aufgezeigt: die Anklage wird zu einer Mahnung umgestaltet, die sozialen Verstöße treten in den Hintergrund gegenüber dem Vorwurf der Fremdgötterverehrung. Das wesentliche Anliegen der deuteronomistischen Redaktoren wird darin gesehen, den Untergang des Tempels als Erfüllung der Prophezeiungen Jeremias theologisch zu deuten.

Die "Konfessionen", die den ersten Teil des Jeremiabuches wesentlich prägen, werden noch vor der Einzelauslegung in einem eigenen *Exkurs*

behandelt (233-235). Hier wäre es hilfreich gewesen, wenn die betreffenden Texte kurz genannt worden wären: 11,18–12,6; 15,10-21; 17,14-18; 18,18-23 und 20,7-13. Bei der grundlegenden Beurteilung der Konfessionen schließt sich der Autor der individuell-biographischen Deutung an, die für die Jeremiaauslegung des 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhunderts bestimmend war. Die gattungsgeschichtliche Frage nach dem Verhältnis zu den Klageliedern des Einzelnen wird kurz diskutiert, ohne auf das von H. Graf Reventlow (*Liturgie und prophetisches Ich bei Jeremia* [Gütersloh 1963]) aufgeworfene Grundproblem einzugehen: Spiegeln die Konfessionen überhaupt historische, individuelle Leiderfahrungen wider oder sind sie liturgische Formulare, mit denen sich die Kultgemeinde an ihren Gott wendete? Nur eine Fußnote (233 n. 5) widmet sich dem von K.-F. Pohlmann (*Die Ferne Gottes. Studien zum Jeremiabuch* [BZAW 179; Berlin 1989]) und anderen vertretenen wichtigen Neuansatz: die Konfessionen als sekundäre Deutung der persönlichen Erfahrungen des Propheten mit Hilfe der in den Klagepsalmen entwickelten Formsprache.

Am Ende dieses Exkurses gibt der Autor eine theologische Deutung aller Konfessionen in ihrem vorliegenden Ablauf. Sie zeigen einen Weg vom anfänglichen Vertrauensverhältnis (11,18ff) über das klagende Fragen (12,1ff) und den Vorwurf, Gott sei ein "Trugbach" (15,18), bis zur Verzweiflung und Selbstverfluchung (20,7-18). Leider wird diese Aussage dadurch verdunkelt, dass sie durch eine Vielzahl aneinandergereihter Fragen ausgedrückt wird.

Einige Mängel, die die exegetische Qualität des Kommentars beeinträchtigen, dürfen nicht unerwähnt bleiben:

1. Literatur aus dem nichtdeutschsprachigen Raum wird kaum verwendet. Neuere Ansätze der Auslegung (z. B. der rhetorische Ansatz von J.R. Lundbom, die narrative Analyse von E. di Pede, die theologische Deutung von W. Brueggemann) bleiben deshalb unberücksichtigt.

2. Zitiert wird meist ältere Literatur, u.a. B. Duhm (1902), P. Volz (1933), W. Rudolph (1968) und W. Thiel (1973/1981), und zwar stets zur Stützung der eigenen Position. Eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit neueren Werken findet kaum statt; der neueste und umfangreichste Kommentar zum Jeremiabuch von G. Fischer (*Jeremia 1-25 und 26-52*, 2005) wird z.B. fast völlig übergangen.

3. Diese Zurückhaltung, die mit der praktischen Zielsetzung des Kommentars erklärt werden könnte, drückt sich auch im Stil aus. Thesen werden oft in der Form von Fragen vorgetragen. Im Kapitel über die Buchentstehung wird dieses Vorgehen sogar ausdrücklich zur Absicht erklärt (36 n. 241). Der Leser wird dadurch mit bestimmten Auffassungen konfrontiert, ohne dass diese näher begründet würden.

4. Diffizile historische und literarische Fragen, die in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten ausführlich diskutiert wurden, werden manchmal nur kurz behandelt, z.B. die Reform des Joschija (3), die Rolle der Septuaginta (41).

5. Unbefriedigend bleibt die vage Information, Jerusalem sei im “im Jahr 587 (oder 586)” erobert worden (6). Zwar ist die Fixierung des exakten Datums bekanntermaßen schwierig, doch gerade deshalb sollte jemand, der die Chronologie Judas gründlicher studiert hat, sich für eine der möglichen Datierungen entscheiden.

6. Brauchte es wirklich das neue Kürzel “jerdtr” (“jeremianisch-deuteronomistisch”), um die Redaktion des Jeremiabuches zu bezeichnen? Im Übrigen ist auch der Ausdruck “Schicht” (und der Vergleich mit dem Sahneüberzug auf einer Obsttorte, 37 n. 246) ungeeignet, um die schriftstellerische und theologische Kreativität jener Personen zu erfassen, die das überlieferte Textmaterial gliederten, umformten und ergänzten.

7. Der Gottesname wird in dem Kommentar durchgängig ausgeschrieben (“Jahwe”). Vorzuziehen ist die in der exegetischen Literatur üblich gewordene Schreibweise “JHWH”, da sie auf die jüdische (aber auch christliche!) Tradition hinweist, den Gottesnamen nicht auszusprechen.

Zusammenfassend kann gesagt werden, dass der neue Kommentar zwar keine neuen Erkenntnisse für die exegetische Wissenschaft liefert, dafür aber einen soliden Überblick über den (vor allem älteren) Stand der Jeremiaforschung. Vor allem den in der Pastoral, Katechese und Homiletik engagierten Theologen und Laien kann er ein brauchbares Hilfsmittel sein, um einen nicht zu ausführlichen und nicht zu knappen Überblick über die wichtigsten exegetischen und literarischen Probleme des Jeremiabuches und seine zentralen theologischen Inhalte zu gewinnen.

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Ulrich BERGES, *Jesaja 40–48* (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament). Freiburg – Basel – Wien, Herder, 2008. 559 p. 17 × 24. € 90 – SFr 149

Berges's commentary on Isaiah 40–48 is the first of a projected three-volume commentary on the whole of Isaiah 40–66 (Isaiah 40–48; 49–55; 56–66). It grows out of his earlier Münster Habilitationsschrift, *Das Buch Jesaja: Komposition und Engestalt* (Herders biblische Studien 16; Freiburg 1998), which the present reviewer reviewed in the *Review of Biblical Literature* (April 15, 2002; see bookreviews.org). In his earlier work, B. rejected the hypothesis that the book of Isaiah was the product of Fortschreibung, that is, the continued literary expansion of the work based on the reinterpretation of its earlier material. Instead, he argued that Isaiah was formed by the assembling of six major collections in Isaiah 1–12; 13–27; 28–35; 36–39; 40–48/49–55; and 56–66, which were composed independently of each other

before they were brought together during the course of the book's diachronic formation.

In my review of B.'s *Habilitationsschrift*, I argued that his analysis of the book was overly influenced by diachronic considerations that did not take sufficient account of the synchronic character of the book. This is not to say that an interpreter must choose one or the other approach. Rather, both synchronic and diachronic analyses are essential to full interpretation of a work like Isaiah, which presents a distinctive literary form as the vision of the eighth-century prophet, Isaiah ben Amoz, and nevertheless displays very clear signs of a lengthy compositional history. Although B. still holds to his basic collection theory in the present commentary, it is clear that he has thought long and hard about the questions of synchronic and diachronic analysis and their interrelationship in the overall interpretation of the book of Isaiah. The present commentary displays important advances in B.'s understanding of the issue — and indeed, it makes an important contribution to research on Deutero-Isaiah — but B.'s understanding of synchronic method is at times subservient to his diachronic concerns, and this causes him to miss some important opportunities in interpreting Isaiah 40–48 as a component of the book of Isaiah. Likewise, he is sometimes too quick to accept the theological claims of these chapters, e.g., ΥHWH 's triumph in bringing Cyrus (see below), without full critical reflection. At the same time, his detailed exegesis of these chapters constitutes an important model of diachronic form-critical exegesis that will inform discussion of Isaiah 40–48 for years to come.

A substantive bibliography of major commentaries and studies on Isaiah 40–48 and other relevant topics opens the volume. An introduction of nearly fifty pages lays out B.'s overall perspectives on these chapters. Detailed treatment of the major sub-units of these chapters, including B.'s German translation of the text at hand, text critical and philological notes, detailed exegetical analysis of the text, very useful intertextual references, extended verse by verse exposition, and a concluding section that sums up the “meaning” (“Bedeutung,” perhaps better, “Interpretation”?) of the text, constitutes the bulk of the volume.

In his statement of exegetical and hermeneutical foundations, B. recognizes the major shift that has taken place in the interpretation of prophetic literature from a focus on the original prophetic word of the prophet to a recognition that prophetic literature constitutes “literary cathedrals” that were constructed over the course of centuries, in the case of Isaiah, from the eighth through the third centuries B.C.E. Although Isaiah is the product of a long process of composition, he denies that any overarching master plan guided construction of the work; interpreters must be satisfied only with the major collections that now constitute the book, Isaiah 1–12; 13–27; 28–35; 36–39; 40–48; 49–55; and 56–66. Like the other prophetic “cathedrals” of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the book of Isaiah then emerges as

a “Symphony of the Divine Word” which Israel and the nations likewise encounter. B. is careful here to consider the diachronic dimensions of these collections, insofar as they must be read in relation to the circumstances, settings, and concerns for which they were written.

Although he takes up the question of synchronic exegesis at this point, he tends to relegate this concern to the sphere of text reception, viz., the literary esthetics of the text, its mood, and its theological meaning of the divine word over time and space. But here one must ask, how do these components of the book fit and work together to form the book of Isaiah? B. argues that the prophet Isaiah ben Amoz constitutes the founder of the discourse of the book, but B. shows little interest in asking how chapters 40–48 relate to the book as whole instead of being merely a component of Isaiah 40–55. If the book of Isaiah is Isaiah’s book as he argues (p. 43), then the Babylonian period materials in Isaiah 40–48 would presumably have something to do with the presentation of the eighth century prophet in the collections that now constitute Isaiah 1–39 (and 56–66). Someone(s) took the trouble to put these components together, which suggests some hermeneutical viewpoint concerning the interrelationships of these materials. B. is correct to call for a reading of Isaiah 40–48 in relation to historical context, but the literary context of Isaiah 1–66 in which Isaiah 40–48 function also demands attention.

B.’s discussion of the history of research on Deutero-Isaiah takes a very interesting turn with his focus on the anonymity of Deutero-Isaiah in the work of Duhm and later in the work of Caspari, because it undermines the long-standing Christian interpretation of prophecy as the work of individual men of God who announced the final revelation of Jesus Christ. But B. wants to take the point further than most scholars who have been satisfied with the claim that Deutero-Isaiah must be an anonymous prophet of the exile—and therefore represents a return to the usual portrayal of the prophet as the individual man of God. B. argues persuasively that the Deutero-Isaiah is not the product of an individual prophet. Rather, Deutero-Isaiah is the product of anonymous Temple singers who composed Isaiah 40–55 as liturgical poetry—much like the Psalms—that was intended to be performed as part of the lamentation rituals of the Jewish community during the period of the Babylonian exile. This bold hypothesis builds on much earlier work by Caspari, Eaton, Baltzer, and others who have pointed to the liturgical and dramatic character of Deutero-Isaiah, and it has tremendous potential for rethinking the history, function, and interpretation of both Deutero-Isaiah and the book of Isaiah as a whole. Insofar as visionary and prophetic experience is so closely tied to temples or other cultic sites in ancient Israel and Judah and throughout the ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman worlds, it makes great sense to point to the Levitical singers of the Temple, who are identified themselves as prophets in Chronicles, as the social group responsible for the

formation of our prophetic books. But this of course raises questions relevant to those asked above, viz., to what extent does this hypothesis also have an impact on our understanding of Isaiah 1–39, which also includes liturgical compositions (e.g., Isaiah 12)? And to what extent does Isaiah 40–55 then have to be read in relation to Isaiah 1–12; 13–27; 28–35; 36–39; and 56–66? Indeed, do these diachronically defined building blocks constitute the synchronic literary structure of Isaiah? The work of many interpreters, such as Ackroyd, Clements, Melugin, Seitz, and myself, among others, indicates that they do not.

B.'s discussion of the historical horizon of Isaiah 40–48, which ranges from the late period of the Babylonian exile through the earlier reign of Darius I is both predictable and correct in relation to the diachronic question of composition as far as it goes. But he will still have to deal with relations between Isaiah 40–48 and Isaiah 56–66 as well as 1–39.

B.'s discussion of language, structure, and speech forms focuses especially on the genres of prophetic speech, particularly the judgment speeches against the nations and their gods and the announcements of salvation, that are employed in Isaiah 40–48. His discussion of the salvation oracles is especially noteworthy insofar as he emphasizes recent research that points to the neo-Assyrian background of this genre. His discussion of the disputation and discussion genres emphasizes the argumentative and polemical character of Deutero-Isaiah in relation to the polemics against foreign gods and the efforts to argue several key points, viz., the election of Israel, the role of YHWH as creator and director of the world, and YHWH's power to announce the future and bring it to reality.

B.'s discussion of Isaiah 40–55 as a dramatic text points to the sacred drama of YHWH's world-wide sovereignty. Employing the model "the Symphony of the Divine Word" noted above, he argues that Isaiah 40–48 comprises two overtures and four acts. Isaiah 40,1–11 is the Zion-Jerusalem Overture, and Isaiah 40,12–31 is the Jacob-Israel Overture. Act one appears in Isaiah 41,1–42,12 as a legal dispute over YHWH's power in history and a presentation of the servant. Act two in Isaiah 42,13–44,23 presents a confrontation of YHWH with his (sic) blind and deaf servant, Israel/Jacob. Act three in Isaiah 44,24–45,25 takes up YHWH's triumph through Cyrus and the Persians. Act four in Isaiah 46,1–48,22 announces the downfall of Babylon, the end of world power, and the purification of the people of G-d. Each of these texts is discussed thoroughly in the commentary.

This analysis of the dramatic structure of Isaiah 40–48 has much to offer, insofar as it is based on an attempt to coordinate generic elements with communicative content of the constitutive texts that comprise each major element of these chapters. Indeed, it is quite similar to the structure for Isaiah 40–48 that I proposed in a number of works over the years, beginning with Isaiah 1–4 and the Post-Exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition (BZAW 171; Berlin 1988); Isaiah 1–39, with an Introduction to

Prophetic Literature (FOTL 16; Grand Rapids 1996); and *The Prophetic Literature* (Nashville 2005). Of course, B. will eventually have to take account of Isaiah 49–55 in relation to this structure. Nevertheless, one must ask if he has correctly identified the argumentative concerns of these texts or simply tried to summarize some aspects of the contents. For example, is it sufficient to identify Isaiah 40,1–11 as overture concerning Zion-Jerusalem when this text follows Isaiah 39, which speaks of the coming exile of Jerusalem to Babylonia. Perhaps it is an overture in a diachronic reading of the text, but the synchronic literary context of Isaiah 39 undermines any such claim. Is it sufficient to identify Isaiah 40,12–31 as an overture concerning Jacob-Israel when this text is so concerned with asserting YHWH's role as creator? Or has B.'s own preoccupation with the Servant, which he correctly identifies as Jacob/Israel, prompted him to read the servant as the main argumentative concern of a text that in fact is concerned with the servant primarily as addressee and not as the focus of theological reflection? Is it enough to say that Isaiah 41,1–42,12 argues for the historical power of YHWH and the presentation of the servant when the passage is concerned throughout with demonstrating that YHWH is the master of human events and the one who chose Israel/Jacob as the servant? What does YHWH have to dispute with the blind and deaf servant in Isaiah 42,13–44,23? Is it not the contention that YHWH is the redeemer of Israel? And does the concern with the blind and deaf servant not have something to do with Isaiah ben Amoz's commission in Isaiah 6 to render the people blind and deaf? Perhaps Isaiah 44,24–45,25 portrays YHWH's triumph through Cyrus and the Persians, but does the rise of the Persians portend YHWH's triumph or a theological attempt to justify YHWH's inability to defend Jerusalem against the Babylonians by arguing that YHWH planned to bring Cyrus all along? Indeed, the designation of Cyrus as YHWH's messiah and temple builder raises some important theological questions concerning the integrity of the divine promises to the house of David and Israel in general. Can Isaiah 46,1–48,22 stand as a separate sub-unit from the preceding text when the downfall of Babylon and the release of Israel functions as a means to support the contention that YHWH has triumphed by bringing Cyrus? And does not the purification of the people call for some recognition that YHWH was complicit in the first instance by failing to protect them as promised to David and Abraham in the past so frequently cited in Deutero-Isaiah? Isaiah 40–48 — and indeed the book of Isaiah as a whole — raises some important and disturbing theological questions that are often suppressed by the bravado of a drama in which YHWH's triumph is trumpeted throughout the world when in fact YHWH's people were oppressed, subjugated, and exiled by a foreign nation that YHWH failed to stop.

In sum, B. has produced a very valuable commentary on Isaiah 40–48. It does not answer all of the questions that one might ask of this lit-

erature, but it nevertheless provides an appropriate starting point for interpreters to engage these chapters.

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Novum Testamentum

Josep RIUS-CAMPS – Jenny READ-HEIMERDINGER, *The message of Acts in Codex Bezae*. A comparison with the Alexandrian tradition. 4, Acts 18.24-28.31. Rome, Via Ephesus and Jerusalem (LNTS 415). London – New York, T & T Clark International, 2009. XIII-418 p. 16 × 24. € 70.00

Impressionnant mais discutable. Tel est le sentiment du lecteur devant le quatrième et dernier volume du commentaire en anglais des Actes des Apôtres dans le Codex de Bèze produit par Josep Rius-Camps et Jenny Read-Heimerdinger. Dans ce massif commentaire (plus de 1600 pages au total) se retrouvent les intuitions présentées par Rius-Camps dans ses commentaires des Actes des Apôtres en castillan (Madrid–Córdoba 1984-89) et en catalan (Barcelone 1991-2000), appuyées par les analyses linguistiques que Read-Heimerdinger a développées, notamment dans *The Bezan Text of Acts. A Contribution of Discourse Analysis to Textual Criticism* (Sheffield 2003). Une série de vingt articles sur les variantes du texte occidental des Actes des Apôtres dans *Filologia Neotestamentaria* (1993-2008) et la parution de la *Demostració a Teòfil: evangeli i fets dels apòstols segons el Còdex Beza* (Barcelone 2009), qui donne le texte grec employé dans ce commentaire ainsi que sa traduction catalane, œuvre couronnée par le grand prix de la ville de Barcelone, manifestent l'engagement des deux chercheurs.

Une brève introduction rappelle les choix qui guident le commentaire, à commencer par l'affirmation de la cohérence interne du Codex de Bèze (D05), tant linguistique que théologique. Luc a écrit les deux volumes de l'œuvre à Théophile, où il manifeste sa familiarité avec l'exégèse juive, ce qui laisse supposer que lui-même est Juif. On peut par exemple interpréter la double dénomination de Jérusalem dans D05: *Hierosolyma* est une indication purement géographique tandis que *Ierousalem* signale la référence au centre religieux du judaïsme. Le destinataire des Actes, Théophile, est identifié avec le grand prêtre à Jérusalem de 37 à 41, troisième fils du grand prêtre Anne (cf. Flavius Josèphe, *Antiquités juives*, 18.123 et 19.297).

Un élément essentiel de l'interprétation des Actes est ensuite exprimé par la distance entre le narrateur et ses personnages: Luc expose l'itinéraire de Pierre, Philippe, Paul, mais n'est pas toujours d'accord avec eux. Par exemple, un discours n'est assumé par Luc que si l'on a au préalable la mention de l'Esprit Saint; ce n'est que là que l'on trouvera la théologie propre à Luc. Celui-ci montre ses personnages comme étant faillibles, et se débattant pour comprendre la vraie nature de l'enseignement de Jésus et quitter leurs précompréhensions de la venue du Messie. Une fois que ce passage est fait, Luc passe à un autre personnage. Pour Paul, les auteurs remarquent sa résistance à l'Esprit Saint, son obstination à s'adresser prioritairement aux Juifs, contrairement au mandat reçu de Jésus, son

désir d'apporter à Jérusalem une collecte, et le fait même qu'il se défende par une apologie. Au contraire, le groupe-«nous» sert de guide approuvé par Luc. Cette présentation négative de Paul, dont les auteurs reconnaissent qu'elle peut être considérée comme «too subtle and sophisticated to be possible for an author of the 1st century» (5), les amène à conclure que le texte reporté dans D05 est antérieur à celui présenté par les manuscrits de type alexandrin, en particulier le codex Vaticanus (B03), lequel présenterait les apôtres comme des chefs de file infaillibles.

Au long du commentaire, chacune des quatre étapes (18,24–19,40; 20,1–21,14; 21,15–27,1; 27,2–28,31) est introduite par une vue générale et une structuration en séquences. Chacune des ces séquences est ensuite présentée de la même manière: vue générale, structure et thèmes, traduction en synopse de D05 et de B03, appareil critique développé, commentaire. L'emploi du grec est limité à l'appareil critique et aux excursus; comme D05 s'arrête en Ac 22,29a, le reste du commentaire s'appuie sur des papyrus et des manuscrits habituellement en accord avec D05. Les références bibliographiques sont rassemblées à la toute fin du volume, et n'apparaissent habituellement qu'en notes de bas de page. Aucun index des auteurs, anciens ou modernes, n'est fourni. Divers excursus complètent le commentaire, permettant de faire le point sur un résultat acquis par le parcours de lecture, ou d'établir des parallélismes avec Jésus ou des figures de l'Ancien Testament (David, Jonas).

On l'aura compris, les deux exégètes proposent essentiellement une lecture théologique du texte des Actes dans le Codex de Bèze, essayant ainsi de désavouer James Hardy Ropes (Londres 1924) qui refusait de voir dans l'œuvre du «réviseur occidental» la moindre trace d'un point de vue théologique ou autre (*Beginnings of Christianity*, 3, ccxxxiii); ils s'opposent aussi à Eldon Jay Epp, qui affirmait en 1966 que D05 avait une nette tendance anti-juive, thèse qui ne fut pas universellement acceptée et que la lecture proposée ici, qui pose comme destinataire des Actes un Juif éminent, grand prêtre, réfute explicitement.

Pourtant certains choix laissent perplexes. Commençons par le projet: s'il s'agit de présenter le texte des Actes dans le Codex de Bèze, le commentaire devrait tout simplement s'arrêter en Ac 22,29b. Les auteurs en sont bien conscients lorsqu'ils parlent en Ac 21,29 d'une «apparition finale» du groupe-«nous» (199). Cependant le désir d'exposer leur projet théologique les entraîne à poursuivre leur étude jusqu'à la fin du livre des Actes et à employer alors un texte occidental, taillé sur mesure. Par exemple lorsque ledit texte occidental propose en 26,1 un encouragement donné par l'Esprit Saint à Paul, cette version est rejetée, au nom de la cohérence théologique de D05, qui ne pourrait pas endosser ce troisième discours d'apologie après avoir refusé les deux précédents, de par l'absence de la mention de l'Esprit Saint. Or s'il est indéniable que dans le codex de Bèze par deux fois (19,1; 20,3) l'Esprit Saint est mentionné comme s'opposant

au projet de déplacement de Paul, c'est davantage dans la lignée du début du deuxième voyage missionnaire (16,6), où l'Esprit de Jésus avait empêché Paul et ses compagnons de prêcher en Asie et en Bithynie. Quant à la disparition subséquente de l'Esprit à partir du chapitre 20, elle n'est pas antinomique avec les apologies que Paul déploie, qui selon nos auteurs seraient purement humaines, puisqu'il y manque le sceau divin. Mais c'est précisément dans l'étape de la captivité de Paul que le thème du témoignage prend le plus de place, témoignage validé par l'apparition nocturne du Seigneur à Paul (Ac 23,11).

Quasiment toutes les séquences sont présentées en une structure concentrique, mais les correspondances internes sont souvent lâches. Les commentaires de critique textuelle ne se limitent pas aux règles habituelles, mais s'appuient déjà sur la cohérence théologique supposée de D05, ce qui les rend souvent aussi longues que le commentaire proprement dit. Il arrive ainsi que l'intervention du groupe-«nous» en 21,29 est donnée pour certaine dans la critique textuelle (202) et reprise dans le commentaire (206-208); mais dans l'excursus consacré à l'emploi de la narration en première personne, on apprend finalement en note de bas de page que Barrett et Ropes rejettent cette leçon (256, n. 104). Ajoutons que Boismard la rejette aussi. Etant donné le poids théologique donné à cette variante, n'aurait-il pas fallu discuter avec les auteurs en question au sein même de l'appareil de critique textuelle ?

Comme Josep Rius-Camps l'écrivait en 1994: «au bout de mes premiers travaux, j'ai constaté que plusieurs des variantes occidentales s'accordaient mieux que le texte alexandrin (TA) avec l'hypothèse de travail qui avait présidé à mes deux premières monographies» (*Codex Bezae. Studies from the Lunel Colloquium. June 1994*; Leiden 1994, 271). Ce quatrième tome du commentaire des Actes manifeste à la fois l'efficacité de sa lecture, qui donne au texte du codex de Bèze un vrai projet théologique, et aussi ses limites: il arrive plus d'une fois que le lecteur ne soit pas en mesure de vérifier dans le texte lui-même tout ce que les auteurs disent y lire. Mais il faut être reconnaissant aux deux exégètes d'avoir mené à terme l'expérience théologique d'une lecture qui voit le narrateur prendre ses distances avec les figures de croyants qu'il met en scène. Est-ce vraiment le signe sûr d'une antériorité du Codex de Bèze sur l'époque de la glorification des apôtres? Qu'il nous soit permis d'en douter, et d'y voir plutôt la force d'une lecture tout à fait contemporaine des Actes, dans une fin de XXème siècle où le chemin de l'annonce de l'Evangile est apparemment plus complexe à discerner qu'au temps de nos pères.

Varia

Émile PUECH, *Qumrân Grotte 4-XXVII. Textes araméens, deuxième partie. 4Q550-4Q575a, 4Q580-4Q587 et appendices (DJD XXXVII)*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2009. 23 × 31,5. pp. xxvi + 561 + Planches I-XXVI. Relié: £ 110/\$ 220

In 1974, Jean Starcky asked Émile Puech to collaborate with him in editing his share of the Dead Sea manuscripts, bearing in mind the new situation then obtaining in Jerusalem. With this second volume, devoted to other fragments of manuscripts in Aramaic, Puech has now completed the official publication of the manuscripts assigned to Starcky who was a member of the international and inter-confessional group set up by the archaeologist R. de Vaux in 1954. A volume of Hebrew manuscripts, 4Q521-4Q528 and 4Q576-4Q579, appeared in 1998 (DJD XXV), ten years after Starcky's death, and the first volume of Aramaic fragments, 4Q529-4Q549, was published in 2001 (DJD XXXI), while a further Aramaic manuscript, 4Q246, had already been incorporated in the volume DJD XXII, which came out in 1996. In the preface to each volume, the editor recounts the process of the work of publication of this tranche of the manuscripts and explains his position in the editorial group. This sheds light on the delay of the official publication or *editio princeps*. The author expresses his great gratitude to Starcky to whose memory these various volumes are dedicated. He was the first expert in this field but was not able to see the finished product, only the partial sketches made as the work of his faithful collaborator progressed. (His predecessor, Maurice Baillet had already published six other manuscripts in Hebrew from Starcky's assignment in 1982: 4Q501, 504, 508, 511, 513 and 514 [DJD VII]).

The second volume of Aramaic manuscripts, which is the subject of this review, contains fragments of 43 manuscripts that have already been found and the remains of manuscripts hitherto unidentified: 4Q584 a-x, 585 a-z, 586 a-n and 4Q587. There are also appendices containing fragments belonging to six manuscripts published by colleagues or by P. in the first volume but not previously identified or brought together. Some manuscripts had already been made the object of a preliminary communication or edition whether by Starcky, such as the most important fragment of 4Q554, or by Milik, with 4Q550, 4Q551 and 4Q583, or by Puech with 4Q569. Others have been the object of irregular, unauthorised editions, scientific piracy by unscrupulous authors, not to mention the pioneers. All this is mentioned in the footnotes together with errors in reading, numbering etc. Here the expertise of the author in epigraphical matters is clear, something that allows him to suggest a maximal but controlled reading of the fragments so as to place research on the soundest

possible basis. Puech also gives a precise palaeographical description of each hand which is useful for the dating of the text as well as the reading of fragmentary remains. As far as is possible, he gives a substantial presentation of the manuscripts and of their literary genre.

It is not possible in this space to introduce all the manuscripts which were studied by the French scholar, still less to highlight the frequently innovative aspects both of his reading and interpretation. Those offered here are the ones the present author considers most relevant for the conclusions which Puech reaches.

4Q550, a group of fragments published by Milik in 1992, under the title of *4QProto-Esther^{a-f}*, because they were thought to be sources or models for the book of Esther, a book which is absent from Qumran, is divided into two groups of manuscripts, 4Q550, described by Puech as *Jews at the Persian Court*, and 4Q583. The fragments are distributed over several leaves of reduced height and probably belong to the same scroll. Despite the lacunas, this little story concerns a Jewish family whose father, Patirêzâ, a scribe in the service of King Darius, seeks to introduce his son, Bagasrava, as a scribe under his successor Xerxes (I). However, in the course of various palace intrigues, the king comes to be involved, and he condemns the guilty party, Bagoshî. He then comes to profess the Most High God, God of the prophet whom he fills with honor and appoints as scribe with authority throughout the kingdom. The book concludes with a sapiential maxim and an exhortation to imitate the honest official. On the one hand, these remains are not without resemblance to the story of the sage Ahiqar. On the other hand, the old Persian name Bagasrava seems to conceal the figure of the prophet Daniel. The double names are frequent in Mesopotamia at this time. Be that as it may, some chapters of Daniel are very close in content. Thus 4Q550 cannot with any certainty be described as *4QProto-Esther*.

The case is similar with 4Q551 where, again, the editor does not follow Milik's proposal of seeing here a narrative parallel to 'Daniel and Susanna'. In fact, what survives has strong affinities with the story of the crime of Gibeah in Judges 19 and with the war against Benjamin at the end of that book, a story constructed on the model of the visit of the angels to Sodom in Genesis 19 but where the old man is a substitute for Lot. These are the remains of a parallel narrative or else one influenced by this model, perhaps the more probable hypothesis.

Manuscripts 4Q552-553 and 553a recount a vision of angels and of four trees symbolising *The Four Kingdoms* of Babylon, Persia and Media, and Greece to which a final kingdom will succeed according to the allusions in one of the fragments. This last kingdom will be governed by a just king, assisted by judges, to whom the Most High God will give all the kingdoms. This kingdom seems to be none other than that of the saints of the Most High described in the vision of the four beasts in Daniel 7, since it cannot designate Rome as would be the case in the Tar-

gums. With this *terminus ante quem* between the end of the fourth and the middle of the second century B.C., one has thus recourse to another 'Danielic' apocryphal composition, allowing the possibility of identifying the figure hidden under the expression 'son of man': the king and not directly the people of the saints of the Most High.

There follow three more manuscripts, 4Q554, 554a and 555 which describe the vision of the *New Jerusalem*, which should be added to manuscripts 1Q32, 2Q24, 5Q15 and 11Q18. Despite some connections among these fragments, we are far from having recovered the text in its totality. The fragments from Cave 4 render a large part of the beginning of the composition over four columns which have been fairly well reconstructed thanks to the expertise of the editor. In dependence on, but contrary to, Ezekiel, who begins with the temple, the measuring angel accompanies the visionary (Ezekiel?) of the New Jerusalem, measuring rod and book in hand, to measure the city wall beginning from the North West corner, giving the measurements of the sides and of the gates as well as the names of the latter according to the names of the twelve sons of Jacob. Then they enter the city and measure the *insulae*, the streets, the secondary gates, the towers and the houses, and describe the valuable material out of which they are constructed. The description of the fortified city must introduce the passage mentioning a sequence of kings and kingdoms who have fought over and who will fight over this city which is so richly decorated and so well defended but also so heavily coveted: (Assyria), Babylon, Medes, Persians, Kittim (Egypt and Greece), Edom, Moab and the Ammonites 'who will bring evil on thy race' until God delivers them into his hand at the time of the eschatological battle. In a second part, there must follow the description of the temple, from the outside wall to the divine throne, and of its cult, altar, table, bread of the presence, vessels and ritual, feasts and ceremonies, vestments, sacrifices and offerings etc., some elements of which are preserved in the fragments of 4Q4555, but which are better preserved in 2Q24 and 11Q18. The presentation follows the reverse order from that of the *Torah* of Ezekiel, and describes the city as a vast rectangle of 480 stades, a perimeter identical to that of the greatest cities of the time, Babylon and Nineveh, no longer a small square. This presentation prefigures the description of the book of Revelation's heavenly Jerusalem, an immense cube without a temple because God is its temple, and the Lamb. If the calibration of the measuring rod is different – 7 ordinary cubits to 6 spans compared with 6 cubits to 7 spans or the royal cubit in Ezekiel – the length of the rod is still the same, 3.15 metres. While the prophet gives the measurements in rods or cubits and the Temple Scroll gives them only in cubits, the *New Jerusalem* gives them under both forms and uses the Persian *res* for the stade.

The remains of 6 to 7 manuscripts have been collected under the more general title of 'Prophecies and Visions' without it being possible to be any more specific.

With justification, Puech identifies fragment 4Q571 as the second copy from Cave 4 of the 'Words of the Book which Michael spoke to the angels' (4Q529) which succeeds in completing (with a minor variant *br* instead of *gbr*) and confirms that we are dealing with lines 11 to 14 of the first column of the scroll. The return from the captivity in Babylon and the reconstruction of the temple where the glory of Yhwh is to dwell, with a possible quotation from Haggai 2,8 at line 15, 'the silver is mine and the gold is mine', and an allusion to the theme of light emanating from the temple in Isaiah 60 appear to be as if announced in a vision of a patriarch (Enoch?) in the course of a heavenly journey. In fact, Michael is the angel set over men and one of those who accompany Enoch (1 Enoch 24,6; 71,3.13). The first lines of this scroll seem to record the revelations of the great steps in the history of man: the division of the earth, the construction of a city in the name of the Lord of Eternity. Evil will be committed there, but the Lord will remember his creation, will be merciful for the sake of his city and will return to his temple.

A series of unidentified fragments originating from several 'planches' of the PAM are rearranged under the titles 4Q584a to x, 585a to z and 586a to n. Some could contain the remains of prophecies such as 584i with a possible allusion to Cyrus, or could complete manuscripts already published (584a-b-c and 4QEnoch^b, 584d and 534 or 535?); in any case, the commentary indicates the possibilities for taking the study further. The most ancient attestation of the word 'incantations' in Aramaic is to be noted in 4Q586m.

In the Appendices, the author adds fragments recently identified by him and belonging to manuscripts already published: 4Q203 14; 206 5; 213a (*Testament of Levi*^a) 3: a small fragment belonging to fragment 3 permits the adoption of a reading totally different from that of the first editors; 529 3; 531 48-51 and 541 25. The chief interest of these small fragments which have not yet been identified is rather of the linguistic and philological order while an identification is awaited.

There follows a concordance of words that have been deciphered. This has been put together by M.G. Abegg under the supervision of the author. There are also XXVI plates in black and white. It is regrettable that the reproduction has not followed the scale of 1/1 in a number of cases (for ex. 4Q550) and that the printing has darkened the plates, rendering the majority of the reproductions unusable. Yet these are essential in an *editio princeps*.

The volume reflects the expertise of the author in the physical description of the fragments, the palaeographical study, the language, the maximal readings of all the traces visible on the originals or the first photographs, the commentaries, the references to previous studies, and finally the interpretations with the numerous suggestions of restoration in order to find a plausible context and to stimulate future research. In spite of all this detailed work on fragments of unknown books, it has not al-

ways been possible for Puech to propose identifications that are certain. However, the reader is encouraged to read the introductions with care in order to be set on a possible track, a particular opportunity for those who are interested in the Danielic or Enochic literature. The author is aware that, despite long hours of work on these Aramaic manuscripts the work is not finished but simply set on its course on bases that are as assured as possible given the means at our disposal. He deserves the reader's gratitude. Moreover, the editions in this volume should serve as a point of departure for all work in the future.

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E-mail: atla@atla.com. <http://www.atla.com/>

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Autorizz. Tribunale di Roma n. 6229 del 24-3-1958 del Reg. della Stampa



Associato all'Unione Stampa Periodica Italiana

Finito di stampare nel mese di novembre 2011
da Arti Grafiche Picene - Pomezia (RM)